

*“choose a job that you love and you’ll
never have to work a day in your life”*

A Guide to Careers in the field of Special Needs

COMPILED BY KARUNA VIHAR

who we are

This booklet was put together by the Awareness Campaign team at Karuna Vihar, a small school in Dehradun for children with mental handicaps. The school is a project of the Latika Roy Memorial Foundation, a non-profit registered society dedicated to the promotion of creative education. At KV, we treat each child as a special person with unique gifts. Because every person is different, we design an individual programme for each student, taking into account the “whole child”.

At KV we often speak of holistic education. The philosophy behind the phrase is an understanding that human beings do not exist as isolated component parts. We believe that a child with a physical handicap, for example, cannot be treated simply as a pair of legs that don't work. And a child with a mental handicap is more than just a brain that thinks slowly.

At Karuna Vihar we work closely and attentively with each one of our students. We get to know them as people with distinct likes and dislikes. We respect their feelings. We learn as much as we can about their families, their goals, their desires, their economic situations, their abilities and their problems.

Each child in the school is seen by different professionals who work together as part of a team, and in the context of his larger environment: his family, his home, his neighbourhood, his town. In this way, the programme we design is both ambitious and realistic.



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why this booklet?

We wrote this booklet for two simple reasons: one, we want company, and two, we're having so much fun, it seems selfish to keep it all to ourselves.

The field of rehabilitation may be one of India's best kept secrets. Everyone knows about the computer industry and its many job opportunities, or the standard "safe" careers like medicine, engineering and commerce, but who talks about rehabilitation? And yet, go to *any* hospital in the country and you'll find they're looking for trained physiotherapists. Principals of schools for children with mental disabilities would give their right arms for special educators. Parents all over India are crying out for speech therapists.

In the past twenty years, awareness about disability issues has spread like wildfire throughout India. People are finally beginning to realise that there is nothing wrong with having special needs and that perfection is simply not possible for anyone: we all have weaknesses and difficulties at different times in our lives.

People are also realizing, however, that these things won't happen on their own and that trained professionals are essential. With that knowledge comes the need for the professionals who can help make life easier and more rewarding for people with special needs. Because what parent would pass up the chance to help her child to have a happier, more rewarding life? What accident or stroke victims would not prefer to regain, even partially, their lost skills?

Unfortunately, much of the rehabilitation training which goes on in India today does not prepare its students to work as part of a team, nor does it enable them to work within the community. Increasingly, rehabilitation is *hospital* based, where individual specialists see their patients in isolation, with little or no understanding of the whole picture. Specialist services are important, indeed essential, if rehabilitation is to achieve its highest potential, but they are only one of its many aspects. In a country the size of ours, with so many millions of people living far from the large cities where specialists practise, the bulk of rehabilitation services must be delivered *in the community*, where people actually live.

One of the reasons we wrote this booklet is not only to encourage young people to choose careers in rehabilitation, but to choose the *kind of rehabilitation* that can actually change the state of disability in this country. People who work in the field of Special Needs are dealing with life at its most fundamental level: it is essential that we get it right.

Rehabilitation is a field bursting with opportunity. And because it is a human services profession catering to an endless variety of situations, as a career it offers a wide range of creative options and flexible arrangements. With a little ingenuity, you can tailor your basic skills into the perfect job: the one that suits **you**.

At Karuna Vihar, we are always on the lookout for bright, happy, energetic people. When we find them, we encourage them to consider Special Needs as a career. It will be good for us - we need more colleagues to discuss ideas and share experiences with. It will be good for our kids - they need more professionals to help them achieve their full potential. It will be good for the country - India needs to give its citizens with disabilities the same opportunities as everyone else.

But most of all, it will be good for those young people themselves. Because the happiness that comes from a career in Special Needs is not easily found in the world today. And isn't happiness what we are all looking for?



letter to parents

Although this booklet has been written primarily for your son or daughter, we wanted to address you directly as well. Some of us working on this project are also parents and we have the same concerns that you do as our own children get closer to the age when they must choose a career.

Like you, we want our children to have jobs they enjoy, but also like you, we want them to be financially secure and able to provide for **their** children.

Many parents, drawing on their own experience while growing up, pressure their children to choose a "safe" career - something like medicine, accounting or engineering. But while these are certainly good choices for youngsters who are interested in them, they are not the only ones. The world has changed dramatically since we were growing up and the variety of career options for young people today is remarkable.

Freelance and consultancy careers are now commonplace and the internet makes working from home an appealing alternative to the standard 10-6 commuter existence. Flexibility and creativity are two of the qualities most needed to succeed in this environment and wise parents are beginning to understand that the rigid approach which served them when they were choosing a career will probably not work for their child today.

The field of rehab, as you will see in this booklet, is full of career opportunities which can not only be satisfying and useful to society but also well-paid. With good training and commitment, many young people are discovering for themselves the tangible and intangible rewards of a job in Special Needs. Maybe your son or daughter could be one of them!



a note to professionals

This little booklet is our first attempt to give young people a glimpse into the complex work being done today in the field of disability rehabilitation. While we realise that this is far from a comprehensive view and that much more could have been included, we hope to at least make a beginning at sparking the interest of the next generation of rehab professionals. In our effort to simplify without neglecting the essentials, we may have inadvertently made errors of fact or judgment. If so, please give us the benefit of your constructive criticism! We welcome your suggestions, ideas or offers of help for the next edition.

for the rest of your life

Making A Career of What You Love Most

So what do you want to be when you grow up? It's a question just about everyone gets asked as a young child. And at that stage you can give almost any answer and no one minds. You may want to be a fashion model one day and the Prime Minister the next - it's all part of the game! But by the time you reach Class X, things have changed. Now you are suddenly supposed to know for certain what you want to be and how you mean to do it, and changing your mind is not an option.

Even the whole process of 'making up your mind' is a bit of a joke. Most young people are not given a choice. Their parents know what is best for them, they decide what their careers should be, and often, the student's aptitude, skills and interests are the last things considered. More important issues like job security, salary expectations and prestige predominate. No wonder so many young people feel apathetic about their careers; it's hard to feel passionate about a choice you never made.

Scared because it all sounds familiar and you haven't a clue how to get around it? Good news! You're not alone. You may be confused, but at least you're thinking. And most important, you are the only *you* there is and you only have one life!

Dream on...

Think about it, what do you most love to do? Surprisingly, identifying our dreams is sometimes the hardest thing to do. We talk to those around us, read books, observe our peers and consult our teachers or our parents. That's all very useful and important because things *do* become clearer when we share them with others, but the truth is that ultimately, the answer lies within us.

You may find it difficult to admit that your dream is to be a rock star or a rocket scientist. Why? Because most of us are so accustomed to being told what to think that we have never learned how to do it on our own. We have become so used to doing the 'done' thing that we cannot even consider doing something different.

But luckily, the world is changing. The old rules no longer apply. Today, it is initiative and creativity that the world rewards. Ever heard of the term, 'venture capital'? It refers to money that people will invest to help you develop and sell a good idea - a concept that didn't even exist when your parents were your age. That's just a tiny example of how far we have come; people will pay for a good idea! In the meantime, corporations are downsizing, middle management is becoming a thing of the past and, closer to home, what's the percentage of those who finally make it into an IIT or an IIM anyway? Only the ones who truly believe it's their calling. Is it even worth the effort of trying if it isn't yours?



What is worth the effort then? Your dream is. It's what you really believe in, and by some strange coincidence it is also what you're most likely to excel in. Because when you do something you really love, something you feel passionate about, you're bound to be good at it. It's just the way things work.

Be warned, however. Following that distant drummer only you may hear is not going to be easy. There may be pressures from all sides; family, friends, society. Some may be legitimate (don't ever dismiss the concerns of those who love you), but many are not. If it's fear of ridicule for being different that's holding you back, remember that it is impossible to please everyone. In the end, your career has to be your decision - you are the one who is going to spend the rest of your life living with it!

It takes courage to make that leap of faith, but once you do, once you throw your heart & soul into achieving what matters most to you, you may be astonished at the doors that begin to open.



Until one is committed, one hesitates. Simply knowing that it is still possible to withdraw guarantees ineffectiveness.

In every act of creation there is one elementary truth, the ignorance of which destroys countless ideas and splendid plans: that the moment one definitely commits oneself, then Providence moves too.

All sorts of things occur to help which would never have happened otherwise. The decision itself sparks a whole stream of unforeseen incidents, meetings and material assistance which no man would have dreamed possible.

Whatever you dream you can do, begin it. Begin it. Now.

~ Goethe

Making Your Dream a Reality

Having selected a career goal, make a list of every conceivable obstacle you are likely to encounter. Don't worry if it's a long one: a brainstorming session with the people closest to you will probably help you turn those mountains into molehills.

Then consider the wider picture. Is there information you need? People to consult? Training to undergo? You may want to visit organisations doing the kind of work you are interested in or follow someone around for a day or two as they do their work. Draw up a plan. Be specific.

Build a support team: people who really believe in you and your idea, who will push you when you start to feel it may all be hopeless. Don't worry if you can't attract an army; just one believer can do wonders - especially if he or she is good at finding that silver lining in the inevitable clouds.

Don't look for praise or admiration at this stage. You have a good idea, but it's still an idea. People will flock to your side once you make it a reality.

And finally, go for it! There is no force on earth as powerful as an idea whose time has come. Once you decide that yours has arrived, there will be no stopping you.



a job unlike any other

Consider a Career in Rehabilitation

It's very possible that you'd never heard of careers in Special Needs until you picked up this booklet. Wonderful things are happening as more and more people recognise the numerous opportunities that exist in the area.

The Myths...

- Charity is charity - anybody can do it. I want to be a professional.
- Social work is okay, but how am I going to make a living?
- I'm a sciencee. I'd love to give it a shot, but where would I fit in?

Demystified

- Special Needs is a field which requires a vast number of highly trained professionals. It is not widely known because it is a relatively new field in India.
- While it's true that the field of Special Needs attracts more people who work for love rather than for money, no one expects you to work for free. This is a job, a career. It involves hard work, commitment, and dedication, but it isn't "charity work". You may not become a millionaire, but there are areas in Special Needs that are well-paid.
- Special Needs is not the stronghold of those with a Humanities/Arts background. There are many areas of specialisation, from medicine and genetic technology to dance, art and painting, within the field itself (see the chapter on *Careers in Special Needs*). There are hundreds of others you could adapt to meet the requirements of a career in disability rehabilitation (see the chapter on *Applying Other Professional Skills*).

Wanted: Special People for Special Needs

Disability rehabilitation isn't for everyone. It is always challenging and often frustrating. Don't expect it to be your dream-come-true career unless you have what it takes. Your educational background is not as important as the kind of person you are. Degrees can be acquired, but strength of character and the right value system come from inside.

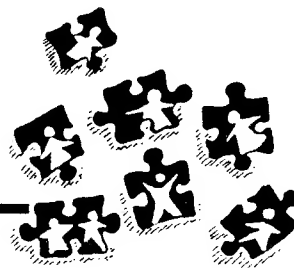
What it Takes

You know you're born for a fabulous career in the field of Special Needs if you can recognise these traits in yourself:

- A desire to make a positive impact on the world
- The ability to find and bring out the best in people

- An imaginative and creative mind
- A positive attitude
- A taste for challenges
- The willingness to try new approaches
- A fair amount of patience
- A good sense of humour

And finally, whether you are considering a career in Special Needs or not, do remember one thing: people with special needs (and that includes each one of us at some point or the other) don't need or appreciate pity. They require support and professional assistance. If you've got what it takes, there could be a wonderful, rewarding career awaiting you in disability rehabilitation. Some of your options could be emotionally and physically taxing and perhaps under-funded at times, but the immense job satisfaction, opportunities for creative growth and the respect you gain within the community make it all worthwhile.



The Interdisciplinary Approach

The field of Special Needs is a little like a jigsaw puzzle. The whole picture depends on the individual pieces, and the individual pieces aren't much good if they don't fit together. Similarly, a child with special needs must work with an entire team of professionals - a pediatrician, speech therapist, physiotherapist, child psychologist, etc - in order to receive a thorough assessment and the best rehabilitation alternatives suited to him/her. Working as a team is crucial among rehabilitation professionals if their efforts are to bear fruit. The interdisciplinary approach is a new idea in India and more and more people are coming to see its value. For the team approach to work, each member must be responsible and dedicated to the welfare of the patient, as well as respectful of the others on the team. When professionals are able to get beyond their own egos, they find there is much to learn from each other. Everyone, most especially the patient, benefits as a result.

special needs

Who, What, and Why

Quiz time!

- Remember the last time you had a splitting headache/ sprained your ankle/ broke your toe?
- Do you know anyone who's never been ill in his/ her life?
- Did you ever study a subject you really hated and always did pretty miserably at?
- Have you tried discussing quantum physics with a person who only speaks Latin?
- Could you lie flat on the floor and then stand up without using your hands for support?

Scoring

Give yourself one point for every 'Yes' answer. If you answered 'No' to any of the questions, give yourself one point anyway. The aim is not to score, as you may have figured; it's to prove how we *all* have special needs at some stage or the other, whether or not we are aware of it.

We all fall ill at one time or another. And when we do, we have special needs. We need rest, medication, a nutritious diet. Most, if not all of us, struggled with at least one subject in school and had to either resort to private tuitions or slogging a lot harder than the rest, or simply doing badly term after miserable term. Not too many of us can discuss quantum physics in our mother tongues, leave aside Latin. But imagine trying to do so, imagine the frustration of trying to explain something to a person who just cannot understand you no matter how hard you try. Congratulations if you answered 'yes' to the last question - you are one of the very few people who can actually do it. (Don't break the weighing machine if you answered 'no' - you're not alone!)

Simply put, the point is this: we all go through times when we need extra support from other people such as parents, doctors, friends or teachers. We all go through times when we need to use certain aids (medication, crutches, crepe bandages, etc.) to help us function better under unusual circumstances. Moral of the story: we all have special needs at one time or another. We all have to learn to live with our shortcomings and make whatever adjustments are necessary to get on with our lives. People with disabilities are no different.



Disability and Special Needs



The term 'special needs', therefore, need not refer exclusively to any particular section of the population - it can be used with reference to anyone at any time, depending on the circumstances.

The needs of some people are more conspicuous than those of others, however. People with severe physical disabilities, for instance, tend to stick out more because they need to depend on physical aids and care-givers. Then there are people whose disabilities affect their mental and emotional functioning. They too have special needs. A third group comprises people who are pretty 'normal' for all practical purposes, but have minor difficulties with co-ordination, reading or counting skills, exhibiting appropriate behaviour, etc. They don't appear disabled, but they do have special needs that call for skilled intervention. People with special needs often require some degree of rehabilitation. Community awareness, early intervention, special aids, special education and therapy can make all the difference in the quality of their lives.



career options

Specialising in an Area of Special Needs

Just about anyone can find their niche in Special Needs, irrespective of whether they have a Science, Arts or Commerce background. Below is a list of careers tailored to fit specialisations from medicine to yoga. This is by no means an exhaustive list. We've done our best to include as many as we could, but have been constrained by space limitations. If you have any questions after reading this booklet, it might help to contact a Special Needs institution in your area (see Directory at the end of this guide).

Bio-Medical Engineering

It is a human impulse to want to repair what is broken, to replace what has been lost, to enhance what is diminished. Nowhere, perhaps, is this desire more urgent than in the case of people with disabilities. With technology now so advanced that we can journey to the moon or communicate in seconds with people across the world, it is hard to accept the idea that a person right in front of us cannot walk, or hear, or see. And indeed, there are scientists who do refuse to accept it. It is because of their perseverance and determination that a disability need no longer be the overriding fact of an individual's life. With inventions like hearing aids, intra-ocular implants and leg braces now commonplace, the day may not be far off when many disabilities will be as little regarded as near-sightedness is now.

Bio-medical engineering is a new and fast-growing field that is leading to enormous and far-reaching changes in medicine, health and rehabilitation. Though much of this work is currently at a research level, and still more raises deep moral questions, many of its applications are already in use in the health sector.



Prosthetic and Orthotic Technology

- ▲ Prosthetics involves the development of artificial body parts to replace or support existing structures. Prosthetic appliances range from tiny devices such as artificial heart valves, voice boxes and false teeth, to larger artificial joints and limbs.
- ▲ Orthotic appliances provide external aid and support to patients with mobility problems caused by illness, accidents, polio, cerebral palsy and paralysis. They include calipers, crutches, body braces, surgical shoes, etc, custom-made to fit a patient's requirements.

The fitting of both prosthetic and orthotic devices is a highly skilled task, demanding precision accuracy and attention to detail. Some of them can only be implanted by a

surgeon (heart valves, for example) while others are the responsibility of a prosthetic technologist or an orthotist. Fitting anything artificial to the human body makes one even more appreciative of the perfection of the original design. Nothing works quite as well as nature. However, recent developments in super-light plastics and other “wonder materials” have taken these adaptive appliances light years ahead of what people had to make do with only decades ago.

Both fields require a science background, material and design skills, knowledge about the disability and the ability to work as part of a team with the physician and the physio- and occupational therapist. Having these qualifications, however, will only make a person a competent technician. A good orthotist/prosthetist goes beyond technical expertise and the “Mr. Fix-It” role to an understanding of the human being in need of his services. A patient who comes to him may be particularly vulnerable emotionally. The part of his body he feels most sensitive and protective about is to be subjected to thorough examination and scrutiny, to be poked and prodded, turned this way and that, held up to the light and perhaps even shown to others for their opinion. While it is true that examination is essential, the orthotist/prosthetist recognizes the difficulty of the situation for the patient and does his best to make it as easy as possible. Establishing a friendly, trusting relationship before beginning is very important, particularly with a child or a person with a mental handicap. Explaining things as he goes along is also crucial: sometimes just knowing why a thing must be done can make it bearable.

Such a relationship also makes it possible for the patient to tell the orthotist/prosthetist when there is a problem with the device. If he is intimidated or overwhelmed, he may not feel able to say if the caliper is too tight or the joint not mobile enough, information which is essential if the device is to be effective.

Finally, it is because of the sensitivity of certain members of the profession that attention is now given to such a seemingly unimportant thing as fashion. Somewhere along the line, a good orthotician realized that a teenager who has to wear an artificial foot has enough problems without having to drag an ugly black shoe around when all her friends are wearing pretty sandals or trendy sneakers. Nowadays, adaptive devices are made as unobtrusively as possible, because people with handicaps don’t just want to be able to move, they also want to dance.

As this particular area in Special Needs is still in its infancy in India, many people are not even aware of the profession. There is, however, a growing demand for these services, and the paucity of technologists is particularly conspicuous in smaller towns and cities. As awareness of the possibilities for a close-to-normal life increases, job opportunities in the profession will also multiply. Because the positive impact of orthotics and prosthetics is so dramatic and immediate, this is a particularly satisfying speciality.



Where to Train

Entry criteria- 10+2 physics, chemistry, biology, english

Mumbai: All India Institute of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (AIIPMR)- Bsc in prosthetics and orthotics

Delhi: The Institute for the Physically Handicapped (IPH), a government-run organisation under the purview of the Ministry of Social Welfare, offers a 2½-year diploma course. The Institute, which provides disability-related services to people of all ages, runs a vocational rehabilitation project for people with orthopedic disabilities, and a workshop for the manufacture of orthotic and prosthetic appliances.

Cuttack: The National Institute for Rehabilitation and Research (NIRTAR) offers a 2½-year diploma course.

Calcutta: National Institute for the Orthopedically Handicapped (NIOH) offers a 3-year BSc degree.

[NIRTAR, NIOH & IPH hold a joint entrance examination which is conducted in various regional centres every May.]

Jaipur: SDM Hospital does not offer a regular course, but does train technicians sent by other institutions for some specific areas.

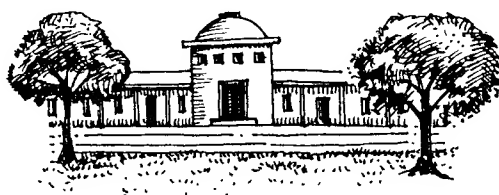
Bangalore: Association for People with Disabilities (APD) runs a course for orthotic technicians and physiotherapy assistants which trains grassroots workers from all over India and parts of Southeast Asia, who return to rural health projects and apply their training.

Courses are also being conducted at-

Chennai: Government Medical College

Vellore: Christian Medical College (CMC)

Note: The Spastics Society centres have special workshops where they manufacture special furniture and low-tech appliances that are useful to people with orthopedic disabilities.



Ophthalmic Technology



Visual impairment covers a very wide range from simple near- or far-sightedness to total blindness. It is a disability which can be treated in a variety of ways, from spectacles and contact lenses to cataract surgery and intra-ocular implants. Ophthalmic technologists are skilled professionals who work in hospitals and eye-clinics where they work with ophthalmologists in testing vision, and making spectacles and lenses.

For people who are interested in science and its practical applications, but are not interested in a medical career, this is just one of a range of paramedical options available in India.

Where to Train

Entry Criteria- 10+2 Physics, chemistry, biology and English

Delhi: The All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) offers a 3-year BSc degree. Admission is based on a candidate's performance in a common entrance test.

Mumbai: Jaslok Hospital, B.Y.L. Nair Hospital and K.E.M. Hospital all offer 3-year diploma courses.

Several government hospitals and eye hospitals across the country conduct 2-year diploma courses in Optometry to train as Ophthalmic assistants.



Special Education

Education is so critical a part of a child's development that it is now recognized as a fundamental right. Enshrined in India's constitution, an education is guaranteed to every child in the country.

Whether it actually happens or not is, of course, one of the most vexed questions of our times, but the understanding which led to the provision being made in the first place is evidence of the importance of education in a child's life.

A child who cannot see, who cannot hear, whose physical handicap makes it impossible for him to move on his own, or whose mind works more slowly than average is no different from any other child in this respect. He needs an education too, and not just an ordinary one. His needs are special.



Having a handicap in no way implies that a child cannot learn or even excel. Beethoven, one of the world's greatest composers of classical music, was deaf. Ved Mehta, one of India's finest writers, is blind. Christy Brown, whose body was almost completely crippled with Cerebral Palsy, was a renowned painter and writer who held the brush and the pen between the toes of his left foot. And Helen Keller, who was blind and deaf and could not speak, dazzled the entire world with her tireless work for people with disabilities.

A *Special Educator* is, first and foremost, a teacher. Like every other teacher, she is trained to teach her students what they need to know. The difference is that every child she works with may need to know something different. While we are concerned here specifically with children whose special needs lie in the more traditional understanding of that term - i.e. physical and mental disabilities - a truer picture would include children who fall through the cracks in the mainstream school system: street children, children of migrant labourers and prisoners, children with terminal diseases. All of them have special needs which require a special education.

A Special Educator assesses the strengths, weaknesses and unique learning needs of each child in her class and designs an individual educational programme that best addresses those needs. Because many children with disabilities require assistance in becoming independent, good special education often involves teaching self-help skills like feeding, dressing, handling money and using the phone.

Other children with normal intelligence but with a physical problem or a learning disability simply need a slightly different approach from that of the mainstream classroom. Given a slower pace, or assistance with note-taking, or permission to type rather than write, or one-to-one attention from a teacher, they are able to follow the normal school curriculum and take their Board exams just like anyone else. Still others may benefit from the Open School system, which allows students to take their Board exams over a five year period, rather than all in one go.

Many children with disabilities miss out on the everyday activities of childhood: because they are "different" they often do not get to play like normal kids, nor are they included in games or in neighbourhood explorations.

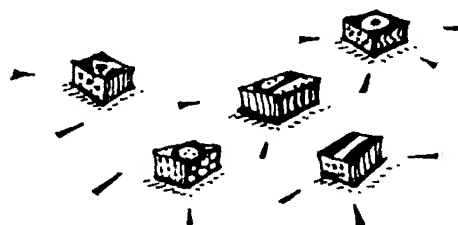
Missing out on play means missing out on learning. A good special educator makes sure that her kids get plenty of play, both structured and unstructured. She uses music, art, drama and craft activities to make learning more concrete and to help her children develop the social skills they need to cope in the wider world.

Special Education, while flexible and creative, is not free-flowing and unstructured. On the contrary, each child's progress is carefully planned and monitored and the activities of one developmental stage must be thoroughly mastered before moving on to the next. A successful Special Educator must therefore be organised and disciplined in her approach and understand the importance of regular assessment and good record keeping.

Special Education is first and foremost, a *teaching* job. Because its very foundation rests on an individual approach to each student, however, it is usually more flexible than a teaching job in the normal school system. Many teachers in the normal schools dream of being able to design their curriculum without the constant hassle of having to finish the Board syllabus. In Special Education, it often happens.

Because different disabilities require different teaching approaches, training for Special Educators varies accordingly. Throughout the country, there are diploma and degree courses in Special Education for the:

- Blind/Visually Handicapped
- Deaf/Hearing Handicapped
- Learning Disabled/Mentally Handicapped
- Physically/Orthopedically Handicapped



Training varies considerably from one institution to another. Government institutions are perhaps somewhat on the dreary side, with an attitude toward disability which is predictably bureaucratic and reflective of government policy. Having said this, every government institute has its share of absolute gems, people who are committed, intelligent and passionate about their work and who make the best of a difficult environment.

Training in university courses tends to be academically rigorous and demanding. Because universities are centres for research, as well as being connected to other large academic organizations, students in these courses can expect to learn the latest, most up-to-the-minute theories and practices. Practical experience is generally less easily available than in government centres. Most university programs do run small model schools as part of their programme, but it is difficult for them to provide as much experience as students require to feel really prepared.

Training in diploma courses run by the Spastics Societies and smaller institutions like Tamana in Delhi and Dilkush in Bombay are usually on the CBR (Community Based Rehabilitation) model. Very strong emphasis is placed on developing the right **attitude** in students and selection for these courses is more dependent on personality and commitment than on academic qualifications. Students are trained less as “experts” with all the answers and more as agents for social change in the community. In this approach, people with handicaps are seen not as patients in need of services but as citizens responsible for their own lives and capable of deciding their own fate.

Where to Train

Entry criteria

- for diploma courses - class XII 50% aggregate with pass marks in English
- for post-graduate diplomas - graduation in arts/sciences

(Note: subjects like psychology, child development etc along with some teaching experience are preferred, especially by organizations who have an interview system)



Special Educators for the Blind / Visually Handicapped

Dehradun - National Institute for the Visually Handicapped run 18 month diploma courses for teachers of the visually handicapped at various regional centres across the country.

Ahmedabad - Blind Peoples Association - teacher training for visually impaired children

Coimbatore - The Ramkrishna Mission Vidyalaya - B.Ed visually impaired

Tiruchirapali - Holy Cross College - associate degree in special education for the hearing impaired and the visually handicapped.

Mumbai - Helen Keller Institute for the Blind - ?

Special Educators for the Deaf/ Hearing Impaired

Mumbai - Ali Yavar Jung National Institute for the Hearing Impaired runs courses in special education- diploma in education of the hearing impaired as well as B.Ed and M.Ed in hearing impairment (note : courses in special education of the hearing impaired are also run at their regional centres in Calcutta, Delhi, Hyderabad and Bhubhaneshwar).

Chennai - The Clarke School for the Deaf- Diploma in Education of the hearing impaired; Little Flower Convent- diploma in teaching the deaf.

Bangalore - The Institute of Speech and Hearing - diploma in education of the hearing impaired.

Special Educators for the Physically Handicapped

Delhi: Spastics Society of Northern India- 1 year Post-graduate diploma in special education of children with Cerebral Palsy

Calcutta: Indian Institute for Cerebral Palsy - P.G diploma

Mumbai: National Institute for Cerebral Palsy

Bangalore: Spastics Society of Karnataka

Chennai: Spastics Society of TamilNadu

Special Educators for the Mentally Handicapped

Secunderabad - National Institute for the Mentally Handicapped- diploma in special education of the mentally handicapped, 1 year (also conducted at all their regional centres - New Delhi, Calcutta and Mumbai)

Mumbai - Dilkush - 1 year diploma course

- SNDT B.Ed and Post Graduate courses

Bhopal - Digdarshika Institute

Delhi - Tamana Special School - 1 year diploma course

Delhi - Lady Irwin College B.Ed + Post Graduate courses

Therapy

Therapists are people who work with individuals with physical, mental and emotional problems that are beyond the scope of medical treatment but which can be minimised through special activities, exercises and adaptations which the therapist is trained to design and implement. Unlike physicians, whose actual contact with patients is usually limited, therapists spend large amounts of time working directly with their patients. Because of this, they often develop close relationships with patients and are able to explain aspects of their treatment which the doctor may be too busy to do.

Therapy is no magic wand, however. It's a slow, interactive process between the therapist and the patient, and calls for the active participation of both. The therapist's role is to guide and supervise the process of change. This process is often both demanding and painful for the patient. Change is not always easy, even when it is positive, and a good therapist provides moral support to the patient (and sometimes to his family) as he adjusts to new ways of coping in the world.

Therapists, like medical doctors, maintain strict confidentiality about their patients. Because progress in therapy depends so much on the patient's trust in the therapist, she must be absolutely confident that their relationship remains private.

A therapist's primary commitment is to his patient. In the case of a child, or a person with a mental handicap, he must obviously discuss the treatment plan with the parents or caregivers. This should be done with tact and sensitivity, however, and usually not in front of the patient. Many people believe that such patients do not understand what is being said. The fact is that they often do.

Although there is a great difference in the various forms of therapy, certain elements are common to all the disciplines. All therapists assess their patients' needs, plan individual programmes, evaluate patients' progress, and work as a team with the patients' families and other professionals involved.

Since the concept of therapy is a relatively new phenomenon in India, awareness of professions in the field is still relatively low. However, therapy plays such a vital role in rehabilitation that the demand for therapists is growing steadily, particularly in the cities.

Therapists have enormous career flexibility. Depending on their own preferences, they can work directly with children or adults in a variety of settings, such as schools, hospitals, NGOs, charities, residential institutions, private homes, and clinics. They have the additional option of setting up their own practices and working as consultants, teachers and trainers in other organisations. Many combine the soul-satisfying work in an NGO with a more lucrative practice with a private physician.

For a young child with cerebral palsy or an accident victim struggling to regain the use of his body, a therapist may be the most important professional in their lives. To be with them as they work to overcome their limitations, sharing both their triumphs and defeats, is to participate in their lives in the most intense and personal way. Therapy is not just about exercises and clever adaptations: it is about freeing the captured spirit that lives in the person with special needs.



Physiotherapy

Everyone moves. One person may glide along with the grace of a dancer, every gesture fluid and supple, while another advances in painful jerks, every step an agonizing effort. Most of us are somewhere in-between. We stand up, sit down, reach for a book, ride a bicycle, all the while unaware of the complex interplay of muscles, joints and bones that makes it all possible.

Physiotherapists study human anatomy to be able to understand what the rest of us take for granted. They know which muscles do which work so that when problems develop in an individual's ability to move, they can help to sort things out. They specialise in restoring or improving body movement that may be impaired due to disorders of the muscles, joints, bones or nerves. They work with all age groups and their patients include accident and stroke victims, post-surgery patients and people suffering from severe arthritis, rheumatism or paralysis. They even work with athletes and are involved in training as well as in treating sports-related injuries.

Physiotherapy involves the use of specific exercises, stretching and massage techniques, and the application of heat, water and sound. Its objective is to stimulate and tone weak muscles, increase joint mobility and improve posture. It is particularly vital in the rehabilitation of children with cerebral palsy, polio and other mobility-related disorders.

A good physiotherapist spends a lot of time observing her patient. This includes not only watching his movement patterns and preferred positions, but also understanding what kind of life he lives. Does his family sit on the floor or on chairs? Do they use an Indian toilet or a Western one? Does he use a spoon to eat or does he prefer his hands? Can his family afford special equipment or do they have to adapt what they already have? With the answers to these and many other questions, the physiotherapist is able to design an individual programme for the patient that has a chance of succeeding.

The way that a physiotherapist works with her patients is necessarily very intimate. PTs sometime focus so exclusively on the arm or leg in question that they forget it is attached to a real person with feelings and ideas. A good PT always keeps in mind the dignity of the person she is working with. She explains what she is doing as she does it and checks continually to see that the patient is comfortable and relaxed.

People with physical disabilities want to be as independent as possible, and to minimise their reliance on others. As more and more people become aware that this is indeed possible, opportunities for good physiotherapists are expanding accordingly. They are in great demand all over India, in hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, schools for children with disabilities, rehabilitation centres and institutes, and sports centres. While many physiotherapists prefer to stay self-employed, the combination of private practice with institution-based work appears to be both a satisfying and a lucrative option.



Where to Train

Training courses in physiotherapy are of two kinds: institution-based and hospital-based. Non-medical training institutes tend to have very specialised faculty and resource materials that provide their students with sound research skills and a solid theoretical background.

Entry Criteria : 10+2 PCBE or Pre-med examination PCBE.



Institution-based Courses

New Delhi: The Institute for the Physically Handicapped (IPH) runs undergraduate training programmes in Physical Therapy. Selection is based on the candidate's performance in a common entrance test with NIRTAR and NIOH

Cuttack: The National Institute for Rehabilitation and Research (NIRTAR) - Bsc Physiotherapy

Calcutta: National Institute for the Orthopedically Handicapped (NIOH) - Bsc Physiotherapy

Mumbai: The All India Institute of Physical Medical Rehabilitation (AIIPMR); The School of Physiotherapy, KEM Hospital

Other: The Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI) offers 3½-year degree courses in Physiotherapy at its regional centres. Selection is based on the candidate's performance in a joint entrance examination.

Hospital-based Courses

The medical colleges listed below offer 3½-year degree courses with a 6-month internship.

Vellore: Christian Medical College (CMC)

Jaipur: SMS Medical College

Mumbai: G.S. Seth Medical College

Vadodara: School of Physiotherapy, SSG Hospital

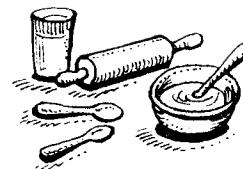
Nagpur: School of Physiotherapy, Government Medical College

Aligarh: Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College offers a 2-year diploma course.

Chennai: The University of Madras - SBC, offers a 3-year course in physiotherapy.



Occupational Therapy



How do we spend our time? What do we **do**? If you stopped to make a list of the activities you engage in on a typical day, you would soon run out of space on the page. From switching off your alarm in the morning to brushing your teeth at night, life is just packed full of “occupations”. We put on clothes, tie shoes, open jars, water the garden, roll chapatties, clean rice, turn the pages of a book, operate a computer, drive a car...

For people with mental and physical handicaps, however, the simple activities we perform without thinking may be too complicated to accomplish. For people whose fine motor skills are poorly developed, buttoning a shirt may not be possible. People with sensory problems may not be able to protect themselves from things that are painful, too hot or too cold. People with perceptual difficulties may not be able to realize when the glass of milk they are pouring is about to overflow. All of them need the help of an **Occupational Therapist**.

Occupational therapy involves meaningful therapeutic activities and exercises, designed to help people with sensory, motor and perceptual problems function as independently as possible in their own environment: home, school, workplace.

An occupational therapist generally focuses on developing fine motor skills and on processing information gained from the senses (i.e. sight, hearing, touch and movement).

An occupational therapist will advise patients/parents on ways to adapt the environment so the handicapped person can function most effectively. She may recommend special cups, spoons or plates to make eating and drinking easier; she may advise velcro closures for shirts rather than buttons; she may suggest changing the handles on cupboards and drawers to make them easier to grasp...the possibilities are endless.

Occupational therapy is an innovative field which requires a perceptive and observant mind along with an ability to think “outside the lines”. A good OT puts herself in her patient’s skin and walks through his day, finding out what he wants/needs to do and then comes up with ways to make as much of it as possible actually happen.

Where to Train

Entry Criteria : 10+2 PCBE or Pre-med examination PCBE.

New Delhi: The Institute for the Physically Handicapped (IPH) runs an undergraduate training programme in Occupational Therapy. Selection is based on the candidate’s performance in a common entrance test with NIRTAR and NIOH

Cuttack: The National Institute for Rehabilitation and Research (NIRTAR)- Bsc Occupational Therapy

Calcutta: National Institute for the Orthopedically Handicapped (NIOH)- Bsc Occupational Therapy

Mumbai: KEM Hospital Bsc Occupational Therapy

Vellore: Christian Medical College (CMC) 3½-year degree courses with a 6-month internship.



A Personal View



For Abha Ranjan, being an occupational therapist is not just a job, it is a way of understanding the human condition. To be alive means that “we occupy time and space,” she points out. “Meaningful activity is crucial. We learn and grow and heal through what we do.”

This awareness separates her from the old-fashioned occupational therapists who most people imagine spend their time teaching people in wheelchairs how to weave baskets. Occupational therapy got its name in World War I when wounded veterans required full-scale intervention programmes to help them regain the use of their arms and hands. At that time, most treatment was based on craft activities like weaving and pottery.

The speciality has come a long way since those days. Now an occupational therapist may work with infants with Cerebral Palsy, children with learning disabilities, stroke patients or accident victims. Abha Ranjan, who specializes in pediatric OT, works individually with children with learning disabilities in a normal school setting. She has also worked in a school for children with mental and physical handicaps, as well as privately in her patients’ homes.

What exactly she does varies enormously depending on the needs and desires of the individual child. Children with learning difficulties often have trouble with perceptual skills that require an understanding of spatial concepts. To help them, Abha might use jigsaw puzzles, construct block towers or arrange furniture in a doll’s house.

For older children or adults with similar problems, she would design a very different set of activities to achieve the same goals. A boy of 17 or woman of 35 is not going to want to sit and make block towers regardless of how much it might help them achieve better depth perception!

With older children and adults, OT generally focuses on strategies to allow the person to accomplish specific tasks which are important to him/her. This varies according to the individual and may include use of a computer, bathing and dressing independently, shaving, tying a turban or putting on make-up. A good OT will also make creative suggestions for adapting the standard furniture and equipment of the patient’s own home, school or workplace.

Abha Ranjan came to OT as a career in a roundabout way. In college, she majored in the hard sciences - Physics, Chemistry, Biology - but after graduating, she took a year

off and studied French. Then a friend who was a psychiatrist told her about OT and suggested that she apply for a three year training course at the Institute for the Physically Handicapped in New Delhi.

The entrance requirement was only 10+2, which made Abha, as a college graduate, one of the oldest in her class. She thinks it was better that way. In India, she says, “children choose their careers too soon. OT is not a profession to choose after 10+2. It requires more maturity.”

After completing her training, she began working with children with Cerebral Palsy, eventually establishing a branch of the Spastics Society in Madras. Then in 1991, she accepted an offer to work in a public school in Albuquerque, New Mexico, where she remained for three years, with an additional one year in Houston, Texas.

The difference in approach to OT in the United States and India fascinates her. Working in America, she says, “gave me a window into my own society.” In the U.S., she explains, “the concept of the individual is paramount, while in India we grow up with a social role, always in connection with others.”

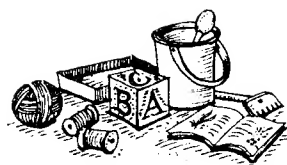
“As a profession, OT teaches people to adapt and become independent and this is not something we value in India. Here, you prove your own worth by doing everything for the handicapped person. Independence is not encouraged.”

Part of Abha Ranjan’s work, then, necessarily involves Awareness Raising. Before people will go to her for help in achieving independence, either for themselves or a family member, they have to believe that being independent is a good thing.

“This profession has really helped me understand the human psyche,” she says. “It is also a creative, hands-on healing art.” And considering the number of ways in which she uses her skills, it is an innovative and adaptive one as well.



Speech Therapy



Communication is a fundamental part of being human. Although all communication is not verbal (you know someone is angry if they storm out of the room and slam the door—even if they don't say a single word), for most of us, speech is our first choice when we want to get something across. We take our ability to talk so much for granted that it is difficult to imagine what life would be like without it.

But for some people, even something as simple as asking for a glass of water on a hot day may be a major task. For others, it may be impossible.

Speech therapists work with patients who have difficulty communicating verbally. The cause of the problem varies from having a hearing impairment to Cerebral Palsy, from a stroke to a mental handicap. The speech therapist's job is to evaluate the patient's abilities and disabilities through careful observations, discussions with caregivers and formal assessment. She then designs a treatment programme tailored to his particular situation. As verbal communication problems are often coupled with feeding difficulties, speech therapists advise in this area as well.

There are many reasons why a person might have a speech disorder. Sometimes the problem is a physical one: either mechanical in nature (faulty movement of the tongue, for example) or due to a breakdown in the complex system of messages to and from the brain (as in a stroke). The patient knows what he wants to say, but cannot get his mouth to cooperate. In such a case, the Speech Therapist might engage in games and exercises designed to strengthen the weak area or to develop alternative strategies for using it.

Sometimes the problem is a cognitive or developmental one. The patient may be able to repeat words endlessly, but unable to form meaningful sentences of his own. He has speech, but no language. In such a situation, the Speech Therapist's role would be on a conceptual level, helping him to understand the connection between objects and words, or between ideas and words and to translate that understanding into meaningful speech.

Because communication is so multi-dimensional, a Speech Therapist also works on improving her patients' social interaction skills (often using play and group work), developing memory skills, teaching more complex grammar, building vocabulary and improving listening and concentration.

A Speech Therapist makes use of a wide variety of teaching tools, always with the individual patient in mind. Toys, household objects, books, photos, music and games are all part of her repertoire.

An important aspect of speech therapy is the development of **augmentative communication** for people who understand much more than they are able to say. Augmentative communication is a creative, alternative approach to speaking verbally. Using



sign language (from the sophisticated language used by deaf people to a simple collection of easily understood gestures for people with limited mental ability), language boards with pictures and words the person can point to, and even computers, augmentative communication helps a person go beyond the spoken word to express his thoughts and needs.

Audiologists, on the other hand, work with people experiencing hearing problems. Their job involves identifying the type of hearing problem and its severity using a range of tests and assessments. They prescribe appropriate hearing aids, develop individual programmes for auditory training and suggest strategies on how their patients can cope better in a hearing world.

Human communication is a huge field, with many avenues to explore. It encompasses aspects of psychology, human biology, phonetics, linguistics, audiology, speech sciences, child development, disability, literacy, and even electronics!

There are 11 key institutions known for training speech therapists and audiologists in India. To be a good speech therapist, you must have some commitment to self-study in addition to the basic degree training which forms the minimum qualification for practising in this country.

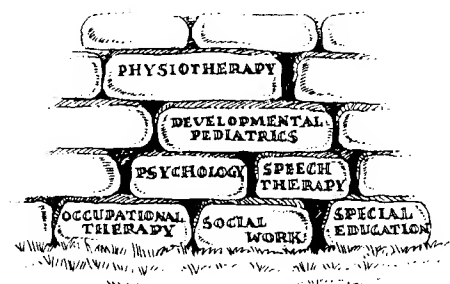
Where to Train

Mysore: The All-India Institute of Speech and Hearing (AIISH), the premier institute for the training of speech pathologists and audiologists in India, offers a BSc degree in Speech and Hearing, MSc degrees in Audiology and Speech Pathology, and PhD-level programmes.

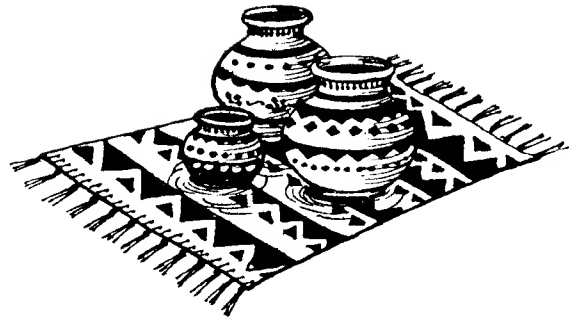
Mumbai: Ali Yavar Jung National Institute for the Hearing Handicapped offers diploma courses in special education for the hearing impaired as well as both Bachelor and Master's degree courses in Speech therapy and audiology

Bangalore: Institute of Speech and Hearing; same as above:

Delhi: All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) offers a BSc degree in Speech and Hearing.



Therapy and the Creative Arts



So far, we have been describing fairly traditional forms of therapy which are well-known and reasonably well-understood, even by the general public. But not every aspect of a person's nature can be reached by these disciplines. In the past few decades, new forms of therapy have emerged which take into account the understanding that people communicate and express themselves in very different ways.

For people with mental and physical difficulties, this has been the opening of a whole new world. Using the creative arts, problems can be approached "sideways" and resolved in an approach that is non-threatening and actually enjoyable.

A child with a mental handicap, for example, may not be able to talk at all, but through dance therapy, she is able to express her anger, her excitement, her confusion. A person with severe Cerebral Palsy, whose body refuses to work the way he wants it to, may be able to hold a brush between his teeth and create paintings which articulate all the feelings he would otherwise keep bottled up inside.

Through these and other media like drama, music and play, therapists in the creative arts are helping people (both able and disabled) to live fuller, happier lives.

At present, training in the creative therapies (except in Art Therapy) does not exist in India. People who practise them have either been trained abroad or have apprenticed themselves to someone already in the field. But as more people become aware of the exciting possibilities these therapies promise, training for special needs may begin to include them in their curriculum.

Art Therapy

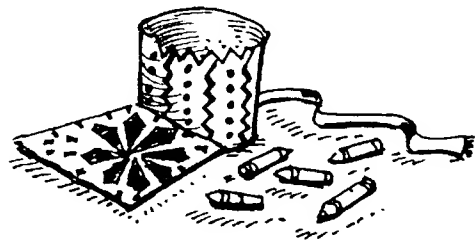
In a consumer culture like ours, when considering art we usually focus on the finished product: the painting framed and hanging in a gallery, the sculpture mounted and displayed in a museum. We marvel at the work and look discreetly for the price tag.

What often gets forgotten is the *process* of creation. What did the artist have to go through to get those particular colours on that particular canvas? What contortions of her hands were necessary to form that particular shape from that particular stone?

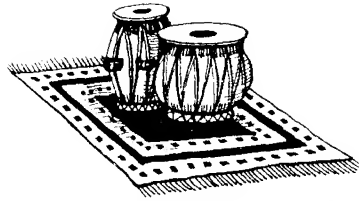
For people with communication difficulties or emotional problems, the simple act of putting paint on paper or shaping clay with their hands may help to release frustration and achieve some balance in their lives.

For the *art therapist*, the process itself is also very revealing: how does his patient sit while working? What sort of brush strokes does she use? Which colours does she habitually choose? How does she handle the clay? The end result, whether it is beautiful or not, also tells the skilled therapist a great deal for the artist's subconscious mind, as well as her level of development, are expressed through her creations.

In art therapy, the patient is encouraged to experiment freely in a safe environment in which there is no such thing as "doing it wrong". Having permission to express herself through art may lead to breakthroughs in other areas as well. "Art gave me a way to express myself without anybody interpreting," Danny, a young man with severe Cerebral Palsy, explains. "I obey the brush and the brush becomes a force."



Music Therapy



Music is often called the “universal language”. Even without words, music can excite, inspire and move us. It can make us feel sad without quite knowing why, or brave and confident for no particular reason. Different people respond to different sorts of music, but it is a rare person who doesn’t respond at all.

Music therapists take this inborn love for music and develop it into a new form of communication for people who have physical, emotional and mental handicaps.

Because music is so interesting and compelling to a child, a music therapist can use it to help him learn to listen carefully, to concentrate. This is a necessary step in learning to speak and many children with communication problems can be helped to acquire language through the skilled use of music.

Music is also very valuable for people who have trouble relating to others. Simply sitting and listening to music together can create a bond between the therapist and the patient which can help the patient begin to trust her. Musical games which require taking turns and listening to someone else’s effort also teach essential social skills.

Music therapy can help to develop physical coordination in people who have difficulty moving. Because a catchy tune usually makes us want to move along to the beat, repeated sessions may build a person’s confidence in his own physical abilities, as well as helping to develop the sense of rhythm which is so important for both movement and speech.

Finally, music offers people with various difficulties yet another way to express themselves. Remember that Beethoven, one of the world’s greatest classical composers, was deaf, and that Ray Charles and Stevie Wonder, two fantastic jazz musicians, are both blind.



Dance Therapy

The idea of dance as a therapeutic tool may seem strange in a world accustomed to dance as a performing art, done by professionals for the entertainment of a paying audience. But throughout the world, primitive cultures have used dance, or ritualized body movements, in religious ceremonies, for healing, celebration and commemoration of important events. This ancient understanding of dance as a healing tool has been rediscovered in recent years and is now a well-established creative therapy.

The way that a person moves tells the skilled observer a great deal about the way that person feels. How she walks across the room, the way she sits, the gestures she habitually uses all reveal her inner self.



Dance therapy rests on the belief that because the connection between outward movement and inner feeling is so strong, changing the way a person moves can also change the way she feels.

It is not simply for emotional release that dance therapy can be used, however. It is also concerned with very practical and concrete matters like physical coordination, and the development of balance, rhythm and concentration. People with various handicaps often lack spatial skills. They may have difficulty locating themselves in relation to objects around them. Up, down, in, on and through can be difficult concepts for them to grasp. The right side and the left, the upper and lower halves of the body may move in disjointed ways, as if unconnected to each other. People with visual handicaps may actually feel great fear when in an open space.

Dance therapy, by focusing first on simple, repetitive movements, gradually building up to more challenging complicated sequences, addresses these difficulties directly and helps patients to resolve them through the pleasurable movement of their own bodies. Like other therapists, dance therapists assess their patients' movements to determine their strengths and weaknesses. Based on this evaluation, an individual programme is created for each person, some of which may involve group work.

PROFILE: TRIPURA KASHYAP

Tripura Kashyap is a trained, professional contemporary Indian dancer and choreographer. As a founder member of "Apoorva", a respected dance troupe from Karnataka, she has performed in many parts of the country and abroad. "Dance should find its space in other areas of our lives, beyond performance and entertainment - like in therapy, education, communication and theatre . . . this kind of infiltration will enrich dance and expand its parameters," she says. "The performing arts should be considered as co-curricular rather than extra-curricular in special schools and treatment centres." What she really enjoys is "getting people who don't know how to dance up on their feet and moving."

Tripura's brother has Cerebral Palsy, a fact which sensitised her to the special difficulties with movement that people with disabilities face. "Music energised him," she says, "and the energy came out as movement."

Intrigued, she began to study whatever she could find about dance therapy. Because there was no formal course available in this country, she applied for and received the Hancock Center Fellowship which enabled her to study dance/movement therapy, modern dance techniques and creative dance in Wisconsin, USA..

There she learned about its practical aspects and its ultimate goal: awareness and acceptance of the body *as it is*. In dance therapy, she explains, "we communicate through movement rather than words. Because the body stores movements - like a physical memory - practice and repetition increases coordination." The goal of dance therapy, she stresses,



is very down-to-earth: better coordination leading to an easier, more confident and relaxed way of moving.

To be a dance therapist, she believes, it is necessary to know different styles of dancing, psychology, anatomy and physiology, various body therapies and allied arts. A familiarity with the martial arts or gymnastics would also be useful.

She has been awarded the Ashoka International Fellowship for her innovations in adapting dance therapy to the Indian socio-cultural context.

Initially people are apprehensive about dancing, especially those who have never done it before, because dance and movement “reveal the body in more ways than one”, Tripura points out. “It’s almost like being completely transparent or naked. It’s easy for most of us to hide behind words, but it’s hard to be dishonest with movement.” But the revelation may be just what is needed. “While dancing, participants in the group not only surprise me, they surprise themselves.”



Drama Therapy

Theatre is all about communication. Drama therapy is a way of helping people with communication difficulties move beyond the obstacles in their way and learn to reach out to others as well as to accept others reaching out to them. The skills needed to perform in the theatre are the same skills needed to communicate in the real world: eye contact, listening, concentration, trust, and showing emotion are all social skills. Mastering them in the make-believe world of the theatre can sometimes give a person the confidence she requires to use them in riskier attempts at real friendship and social interaction.

A drama therapist helps her patients to practice these skills through the use of group exercises and games. When they are ready, she may lead them into acting out scenes from their own lives that have traumatized them in some way and help them to resolve them in the protected environment of the group which they have learned to trust.



Yoga Therapy

Yoga is the coming together of mind, body and soul. This integration is essential for a healthy, spiritually enlightened life. As a science, yoga has great therapeutic value and is



used by many people to maintain health and to promote healing. It is now being widely used as part of treatment programmes for people with serious medical problems.

In the West, yoga has gained recognition and respect as an alternative therapy. Medical universities have incorporated its principles in their curriculums and “pain management” centres of many hospitals use it to help their patients with chronic disabilities. Natural childbirth educators use yogic breathing and relaxation exercises to help their patients go through labour without resorting to drugs. Ironically, however, here in India, the source of yoga and the home of many of its greatest teachers and practitioners, it is still not fully recognized as a true healing art.

A range of specific, remedial asanas are recommended for people with problems like Cerebral Palsy, Down’s Syndrome, attention deficit disorder and epilepsy. When yoga is used with young children or with people with particular disabilities, certain modifications are necessary as all asanas are not suitable for them. Props such as cushions, bolsters, and chairs, may also be used to achieve and maintain beneficial postures they are unable to achieve independently.

To use yoga for therapeutic purposes requires a deep knowledge both of yoga itself and of the nature of the physical disorder. Only a highly trained practitioner would be able to treat patients with medical problems or disabilities. Becoming this proficient entails years of practice.

There is no recognized course in the world for yoga therapy. There are, however, many schools throughout India which impart yoga in the traditional guru-disciple style. Studying in this way involves enormous self-motivation and discipline and, to be truly effective, a total immersion in yogic philosophy. This means a very pure life: giving up meat, smoking and alcohol are just the beginning!

Yoga therapy is in the process of developing and much exciting, pioneering research is being done into its therapeutic potential. It is possible today to choose yoga as a way of life and to make your career one part of that. There is no fixed time frame, no degree and no guarantee, but those who take that leap of faith will find themselves entering a whole new world of peace and good health.

Where to Train

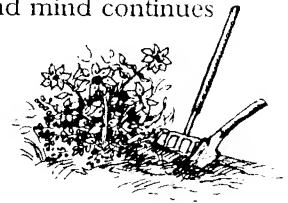
Pune - The Ramani Iyengar Memorial Yoga Institute

The Iyengar Institute is internationally known and practitioners come from all over the world to learn from the masters in this organization. Although there is no course specifically for yoga therapy, the training and teaching methodology is very scientific and well-developed and ideal for applying yoga as a healing art. Training as a practitioner of yoga takes several years of intensive study before one can expect any degree of mastery. It is better to attain some basic skills closer to home before enrolling at the Iyengar Institute. Those interested in pursuing Yoga formally can write to the Institute to find out where the nearest Iyengar practitioner is based.



Other Forms of Therapy

With a little imagination, many activities can be a form of therapy. A good therapist will get to know her patient well enough to be able to incorporate some of his favourite activities into the program she devises for him. For example, **gardening** is a well-recognized form of therapy in which people with anxieties and feelings of inadequacy can be helped to relax and feel productive. Digging the earth, tending plants and weeding are all purposeful activities which provide a sense of order and connection. **Bread making** is another: from the rhythmic action of kneading the dough to the satisfying shaping it into loaves and the final triumph of sharing the finished product with friends, it is an activity which makes people feel good. **Animal Therapy** is a new concept which is being used increasingly with children, especially with those for whom verbal communication is difficult. A friendly animal may provide an emotional focus for a child which she is not able to find in another person. Animals are non-judgmental and do not care what a person looks like or whether they are able to walk or talk. Sometimes simply being able to hold a warm, soft kitten or puppy and stroke its fur over and over again can give a child the comfort he is unable to find elsewhere. **Water therapy**, in which a patient is immersed in warm water for the duration of the session, is sometimes used by physiotherapists for the natural relaxation of the muscles which occurs. **Massage** is a commonly used therapy for muscle tightness and relaxation. As our understanding of the human body and mind continues to grow, new therapies will emerge simultaneously.



Clinical Psychology

Clinical Psychologists work with people with mental health problems (such as psychoses and schizophrenia), marital difficulties, behavioural problems, psychosomatic disorders, alcohol and drug abuse, and so on. Clinical Psychologists have trained insights into the working of the human mind and its effects on human behaviour. They rely heavily on traditional psychotherapy - a verbal form of treatment for people with psychological problems. Their work involves developing positive, therapeutic relationships with their patients; then, based on what they observe, documenting and analysing information to help them select appropriate strategies for intervention. Through discussions about the past, family relationships, childhood traumas, dreams and fears, a clinical psychologist helps her patient to overcome neuroses and change negative behaviour. She helps him to see patterns in his life that continually create difficulties and, in the process of seeing, helps him to create new, more positive ones.

Clinical Psychologists working with young children often use *play therapy* to help their patients resolve issues they may be too young or too traumatized by to articulate verbally. By observing carefully the way a child plays with dolls and other toys, by noting which games are played over and over again, the psychologist is able to draw conclusions about events in the child's life that may be troubling him and preventing him from living normally.



While the kind of psychotherapy described above should be a component of the training for a psychiatrist as well as for a psychiatric social worker, in India it is often neglected. In fact, it could well be made part of the curriculum for many of the therapies, as the skills acquired in mastering its principles are an essential part of being a good therapist. Too often, psychologists in India learn only to diagnose emotional and psychological problems but are not prepared for hands-on remedial work.

Where to Train

To specialise in clinical psychology, you must have a Bachelor's degree in psychology.

Bangalore: The National Institute of Mental Health and Neurological Science (NIMHANS) offers a postgraduate degree in Clinical Psychology and Psychiatric Social Work. NIMHANS offers courses up to the doctorate level.

Counseling



Counseling is an important part of a psychologist's job. It involves listening supportively to a person, empathizing and reflecting back what has been understood to the speaker. The aim of counseling is to help the patient get an insight into his/her problems and therefore be able to resolve his/her difficulty.

While counseling skills are essential for psychologists, they are also vital for every professional working directly in the field of rehabilitation, from doctors and social workers to teachers and therapists. People hearing the diagnosis of a disability for the first time - whether the parents of a handicapped child or an adult stroke or accident victim - need help to work through their grief and confusion. Only then can they begin to understand the nature of the problem and what can be done about it. They must also be given the opportunity to talk freely about their concerns, no matter how silly they may seem. This is a delicate process to which much time must be devoted. Because of the crippling effects of emotional suffering, virtually nothing can be accomplished until the person's grief and anger has been acknowledged and resolved. Counseling, therefore, is perhaps the most crucial investment a professional can make to ensure that the process of rehabilitation succeeds.

It is not a once and for all investment, however. Patients and their parents and spouses will continue to have ups and downs throughout their lives, especially during times of transition and stress. Counseling will make a major difference in their ability to cope and who better to provide it than the professionals who work with them?

Counseling skills are taught as a component of many courses. Specific training in counseling is also available in a number of universities and private institutes.

Medicine



Any doctor, regardless of her speciality, can expect to have patients with special needs. People with disabilities have all the normal problems that take the rest of us to a doctor. They get sore throats, conjunctivitis, heart attacks and stomach aches just like anyone else. People with handicaps who seek medical advice expect and have a right to receive the same kind of treatment that any other patient gets. Having a visual impairment, a hearing loss or a physical disability does not mean they cannot be told the doctor's diagnosis or that they cannot be trusted to get the right medicines.

Too often, people with disabilities are treated as children when they seek professional help. The doctor tends to talk *about* them to whoever has come in with them, as if the patient himself is incapable of understanding or offering information. The only time this is justified is when the patient has a mental handicap. Even then, however, every effort should be made to make the person feel comfortable and included in the discussion. In some situations, it may be preferable to have the entire discussion separate from the mentally handicapped person to allow the parents or caregivers the chance to decide how much should be shared with him. No one should ever assume that a person with a mental handicap cannot understand anything.

While it is true that all doctors will have some patients with special needs, certain specialities will have a greater percentage than others. Obstetricians and pediatricians, as the first professionals a baby is likely to meet, have an extremely important role to play in the diagnosis and rehabilitation of the child with disabilities.

Obstetricians get to know babies even before they are born. Because certain abnormalities are detectable during pregnancy, obstetricians can help the parents prepare for their baby's problems early on. They are also trained to identify high-risk pregnancies which often result in difficulties for the baby: prematurity, a family history of congenital defects, poor nutrition, alcoholism or drug use in the mother and a host of other problems. At the birth itself, they are the first doctors to actually see the new baby. Although many disabilities are not apparent immediately, many are, and it is the responsibility of the obstetrician to inform the parents and to assist them in their adjustment to the news.

This is, of course, easier said than done. It is extremely difficult to be the person who has to break such painful news to the parents. But it is far worse to leave them in ignorance. The earlier rehabilitation is begun, the better off the baby will be. At the very least, if the obstetrician does not feel capable of telling the parents, she should put them in touch with someone who will.

That *someone* will, more often than not, be a ***p*ediatrician**. Most parents, whether or not they suspect that their baby has a problem, will take the child to the pediatrician. Routine check-ups, immunizations and all the normal illnesses of a baby's first year guarantee numerous opportunities for difficulties to be identified and diagnosed. It is essential that the pediatrician take this responsibility seriously. **Early intervention** is the single most

important factor in how well a child with disabilities will do. The sooner the problem is identified, the sooner treatment can begin. Pediatricians can make all the difference in how parents react to the news that their baby has a handicap. If the diagnosis is given with sensitivity and compassion and the hopeful aspects of the child's future are highlighted, chances are much better that the parents will accept the child as she is.

Here in India, many pediatricians prefer not to tell parents the truth because there is so little that can be done about it. What is the use, they ask, of telling parents their child needs speech therapy and a special school if the nearest speech therapist is a six hour journey by bus and the only special school in town has a two year waiting list? It's a fair question. But until parents know what their child needs, how will they go about finding it? The world is full of institutions that were created by parents who were determined their child would get the life he or she deserved.

Other pediatric specialities include **Neonatologists**, (doctors who take care of babies in the neonate period: i.e. for the first month after birth) **Developmental Pediatricians** (doctors who specialise in normal and abnormal development of children) and **Pediatric Surgeons** (surgeons who are specially trained to operate on babies and small children).

Orthopaedic surgeons deal with limb and joint deformities and can intervene in cases of polio and cerebral palsy.

Plastic surgeons don't just do nose jobs and breast implants. They frequently reconstruct the hands (by separating fused fingers, for instance) and faces (by repairing cleft lips and palates) of people born with these disabilities.

ENT specialists deal with speech and hearing impairments.

Ophthalmologists deal with eye deformities and injuries, as well as other visual impairments.

Psychiatrists deal with people with emotional and behavioural problems from a medical perspective, by using a combination of medication, counselling and psychotherapy.

Neurologists specialise in neurological disorders responsible for a range of disabilities from paralysis to mental retardation.

To be effective, it is essential that medical professionals work closely with the other rehabilitation professionals involved as a closely coordinated multidisciplinary team.

Where to Train

We are not including information on the training available for physicians simply because it is such a well known career choice. The point must be made here, however, that we are aware of no medical program in the country which gives a positive disability perspective to its students. While the need of the hour is for a new generation of doctors who truly



understand the nature of disability, the importance of early intervention and full integration into the community, the fact remains that conventional medical training does little to prepare doctors to be useful to their patients with disabilities. It is perhaps up to students to demand the expertise they need to serve *all* of their patients.



Social Work

Life has become increasingly complicated in the last few decades. One individual must play so many different roles in society, and each one has its own demands. We are expected to cope with a staggering array of tasks on any given day: going to work/school, taking care of our health, looking after our homes, keeping the environment clean, following traffic rules, paying our bills, voting, participating in neighbourhood and community events and generally being good citizens. Most of us manage it pretty well, usually without even thinking about it or finding it very difficult.

But for some people, for a variety of reasons, coping is not so easy. The loss of a job, an unexpected health crisis, the death of a loved one, a crippling injury, a divorce - any of these can be the catastrophe that causes a person to collapse under the weight of his own life.

In simpler times, when families were large and loyal, individuals did not fall apart quite so often. The family support structure was there to catch weaker members and take care of them until they were able to take care of themselves. Nowadays, with people living alone or in nuclear families, often in large, impersonal cities, one seemingly isolated misfortune can be just one thing too many: the person who was just barely scraping through may suddenly become homeless, or disabled, or emotionally shattered.

Social workers are the people who move in to help when a person's life spirals out of control. They are professionals who are trained to find creative solutions to the difficulties people are experiencing. Their skills include negotiation, counselling, networking, troubleshooting, advocating, investigating and connecting. Because, by definition, a social worker is an outsider, she is often able to be objective enough about a particular situation to find a way out that might not occur to the person caught up in the middle of it. Social workers are aware of the many services available in the community and they know how to break through the bureaucratic red tape that often prevents ordinary people from accessing them.

For people with disabilities and their families, a social worker can be an invaluable guide and resource person. Many handicapped people have no idea that they are entitled to railway concessions, education and employment quotas, tax benefits and subsidized



rehabilitation aids. A good social worker will walk them through the maze of a government hospital or development office and help them get what they deserve. Social workers often work as part of a team with other rehab professionals. They are the ones who go into a patient's home to get a sense of what this person's daily life is like - information which is essential before the rehab team can make realistic recommendations. A social worker may provide on-going emotional and practical support to a disabled person and his family as rehabilitation proceeds.

Social Work is a fascinating career for anyone who enjoys problem solving in a very human environment. Like many other careers in the field of Special Needs, a Social Worker can function in a wide variety of settings, from schools and hospitals to government offices and U.N. organizations. Pay scales vary accordingly - the popular myth that social work is an unpaid charitable hobby for retired people is simply not true. Social work is a demanding and intellectually stimulating job which requires dedication, creativity and keen intelligence.

Where to Train

Mumbai: Tata Institute of Social Work (TISS)

This prestigious institute runs postgraduate courses in the following disciplines: Medical Social Work; Criminology; Family Social Work; Urban and Rural community work.

Nirmala Niketan: Churchgate

Delhi School of Social Work

Both institutes offer a three year Bachelor's Degree course.

Administration

When we started gathering material for this booklet, many of the experts in the field - OT's PT's, Special Educators, Psychologists - gave us the same advice: "When you do the career section," they said, "don't forget Admin - it's essential!"

They had found out the hard way. Many organisations which were established to serve people with disabilities were started by people who had never run an organisation before. With no management skills, they fumbled along, making up new rules whenever a new situation arose. They invented systems one day and changed them the next. They kept haphazard accounts and did no long range financial planning.

It didn't work. Sooner or later, every organization, regardless of its values or aims, needs systems to keep things functioning smoothly. And why re-invent the wheel? The systems already exist and people go to college to learn what they are and how they work.

Nowadays, organisations for the disabled recognize their need for trained professionals in the field of administration. It is a field with many different facets ranging from reception skills to accounts and secretarial work. It includes personnel management, human resource development, counseling and a host of other things.



You might consider a career in NGO administration if you are organised and enjoy putting systems in place which allow people to work to their full potential. The corporate sector has only recently begun to appreciate something which the NGO world has always known: people perform best when they are happy and when they believe in the value of the work they are doing.

A good administrator, then, is primarily a people person. Although she must be able to work closely with others as part of a team, at the senior level, she must also have the leadership qualities which enable her to guide, direct and inspire them. She must develop systems which allow open communication among staff members, from the professionals to the chaprasis, so that the entire group functions as a team. With this approach, problems are recognized and dealt with in the early stages, and staff needs and strengths can be addressed in a way that benefits both the individual and the organisation.

Another critical role of an administrator is to facilitate the development of a “vision” for the organisation. A vision is a set of long range goals and the values which will allow them to be realised. Getting any group of individuals to agree on the articulation of a vision is a delicate and complicated task, but a good administrator recognizes its importance and makes it a top priority.

A natural corollary to the development of a vision is the development of evaluation tools. An administrator can never be satisfied simply with listing goals, however noble. She also needs to know how progress can be judged: to know whether the organisation is moving in the right direction and at the right pace.

An administrator must also be a skilled counselor. Because hers is a human services job, she must be prepared for a wide range of personal and work related problems where staff members are concerned. Although most people do try to leave their personal lives at home, every administrator has to deal with employees’ marriage problems or health crises, or personality flaws which affect their jobs. There are also staff who require career counseling or who need encouragement to try something new.

Not all admin jobs are as high level as the one described here. Admin also involves accounts (ranging from book keeping to full financial responsibility including investments, budget planning and allocation of funds); reception (greeting guests, answering the phone - critical PR skills!); secretarial work (correspondence, setting up appointments, filing) and so on.

Training for an Administrative job in a rehab organisation is the same as training in the corporate world. Depending on your particular interests and ambitions, you will need to do a degree in Accounts (CA), Business Administration (MBA), Human Resource Development (HRD), or secretarial skills. Knowledge of computers is now essential in most organisations, as well as a good command of English.

Certain essential qualities make the difference between a corporate administrator and one who wants to work in an NGO. These include empathy for the people being served, commitment to a cause, a willingness to work for less money and a belief in the power of the people.



Where to Train

Jamshedpur: XLRI is one of the most well-respected institutes in the country for business training. It offers an MBA as well as numerous short-term courses for administrators (including some specially designed for NGOs). It will require a strong character, however, to emerge from such a corporate minded institution with one's idealism and dedication to serve still intact!

Anand, Gujarat: IRMA (Institute of Rural Management) also offers an MBA and short courses, but these are geared toward working in the rural sector.



Public Relations, Journalism and Advocacy

The issue of disability can also be approached intellectually. For a community to come to terms with its responsibilities to its handicapped members, certain ideas must first be discussed and understood. Journalists who feel strongly about disability may make the subject a particular area of speciality and write about it frequently and in depth. Public relations people can do a great deal to further the cause by their use of the media to educate the public and change the popular image of people with disabilities. These can be adjuncts to a mainstream career or full-time undertakings in themselves.

People with writing and speaking skills are always needed in organizations dealing with disability. There are amazing stories to be told in newspapers and magazines (the artist who paints holding the brush between her toes; the mother who single-handedly built the school her son needed to attend); fund raising appeals to be launched (how do you persuade that civic-minded philanthropist that **this** is the cause to support?); awareness materials to be created (brochures, leaflets, bumper stickers!); and educational literature to be produced...

An organization's awareness campaign is often one of its most exciting programmes. By its nature, a campaign has no set schedule or fixed routine. For people who feel passionately about the issue, who thrive on variety and change and who love meeting many different types of people and engaging with them intellectually, a job as an Awareness Campaign coordinator might be the perfect challenge.

The real training is generally on the job, but the relevant skills required include excellent writing/speaking abilities, a strong, appealing personality and a sharp, analytical mind. Planning and executing a campaign requires creativity, energy and lots of enthusiasm. It also requires a good understanding of disability issues - public speakers must be prepared to deal with all sorts of questions when they make their presentations.

Closely linked with an Awareness Campaign is the issue of Advocacy. An advocate (not necessarily a lawyer!) is a person who forcefully pushes the cause of one particular group. An advocate for the cause of disability might take up the cause of handicapped access in public buildings, for example. He could meet with people in government departments, lobby for allocation of funds, make connections with builders and architects and do whatever is necessary to ensure that the necessary changes are made. A recent example of advocacy in action was the concerted efforts of a number of disability activists to include handicapped people in the next government Census. Through perseverance and hard work, they succeeded in convincing the government that it was not only essential to include the disabled in the count, but also possible. Their victory means that we will finally be able to begin to assess the true state of disability in India.

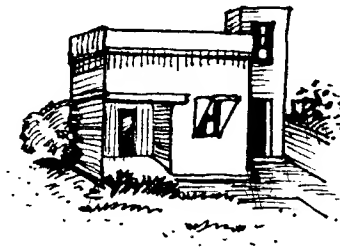
Some advocates concentrate primarily on legal change, working through the courts, while others prefer the political route, influencing the public to put pressure on elected officials. Still others try to implement change at a policy level, meeting with high level officials in the Planning Commission, for example. Advocacy is an extremely effective tool for bringing much needed changes to the existing order.

Being an agent for social change is an exciting and fulfilling career. Helping people to see things in a different way, to look at issues they have never thought about before, is the first step toward the creation of a society in which every individual is valued and protected, regardless of her abilities or disabilities.

Where to Train

New Delhi: Jamia Millia University offers an excellent and highly regarded three year degree course in media and mass communication.

Other excellent general courses (in Journalism, English Literature, and Psychology) include Lady Irwin, Lady Shri Ram and St. Stephen's - all in Delhi; and Xavier College, Sophia College and SNDT, all in Mumbai.



the right place at the right time

Picking the Institution that's Best for You

Once you've decided that a career in Special Needs or Rehabilitation is what makes your heart sing, you dive into the nitty-gritty. One of the reasons you may not have explored the option until now could be that you'd never even heard of its existence. Though the scope and opportunities within the field are tremendous, it isn't the most widely publicized career option in the world. At first, you may find that information is scattered and inadequate. Don't give up. It might take a little effort, but it will be worth your while.

Getting Started

Define your Terms

Begin by asking yourself whether you prefer the Arts or the Sciences. Narrow down your search by short-listing careers within the stream you pick. For example, if your idol is Hippocrates, you may be happiest in a Special Needs area that calls for a medical background. If you're driven by the urge to make a difference by helping empower people to improve the quality of their lives, you could find your niche in Social Work.

Talk to people in the know

If your immediate group of friends and acquaintances can't personally direct you to people who could talk to you about careers in Special Needs, don't worry. There *is* life beyond your immediate social circle! You could check out a special school in your town or city and ask to speak to someone who could point you in the right direction. The Spastics Societies located in each metro (see Directory at the end of this book) are great places to start. The people there are approachable and helpful, and they possess an excellent database of information.

Write to institutions in the Directory section

You'll notice that the Directory in this booklet does not contain a list of telephone numbers. No, we didn't forget. It's just that many of these institutions are still small and may not have the personnel or resources to impart information over the phone. Writing also has another advantage: there's a lot you can gauge from a written response.



Put on your walking shoes

Visit. There is *no* substitute for a personal *dekho*. A place may sound great on paper but could prove disappointing. On the other hand, a place that appears to be small and can't afford to spend a lot on publicity material just might be the organization of your dreams. You can never be sure until you've seen for yourself.

A visit is particularly important if the institution is in a different town or city. Check it out before you apply to make sure it's the kind of place you want to spend six months or a year or whatever the duration of the course is. Try to schedule time to talk with the faculty and students/old students before you get there. Get as much feedback as you can before you come to a decision. Remember you have to live there, so it had better be a place that meets with your approval.

Time to introspect... again

One of the most important things to do at this stage is to tune into yourself and your own needs. What sort of person are you? If city lights put the spring in your step you'll probably be quite miserable in a remote outreach centre. If, on the other hand, you yearn for a quiet existence, chances are you'll be happier in a rural or semi-rural setup.

Think about the vibe you receive from an institution. Are you comfortable? Can you see yourself feeling content and doing fruitful work there? Do the people seem passionate about their work or are they just going through the motions? Do you get a good feeling when you think about walking in their shoes at the end of it all?

Consider also the kind of accommodation offered. Are you a candidate for hostel facilities? If there's no hostel, are you comfortable with living independently or as a paying guest? What about safety, security, transportation?

Another aspect to study is the structure of the course. Does it seem to lean more heavily towards theory? Is there enough scope for gaining hands-on experience? Which do you prefer anyway? If you're research-oriented, a place that lays a greater emphasis on theory may be what you need. On the other hand, if you're more of a 'people' person, you'll crave interaction with the groups you want to work with. Does the organisation you're looking at give you that?

The Writing Test

So you've accepted that teaching is what sets your heart on fire. You've also realized that you adore children and want to spend the rest of your life working with them. 'Giving something back to society' is an important priority on your private agenda. You read the section on Special Education and decide that a special educator is what you were born to be. You go over the Directory and find the names of institutions that offer the relevant courses. You sit down to write to them...and realize that you're not quite sure about what to ask and how to word your letter. Here's a sample on which you could base it:



Institution's Name

Institution's Address

Dear Sir/Madam: (Try and get the name! It always helps.)

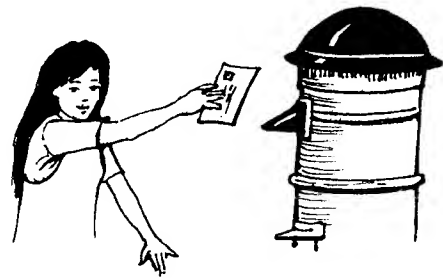
I am a high school/college graduate in the science/arts/commerce stream. Because of my interest in the field of disability and rehabilitation, I am seriously considering a career in _____.

I am very interested in learning more about the courses which you offer at (name of institution), particularly as regards qualifications for admission, length of the courses and the fees charged.

I would be grateful if you could send me a copy of your institution's prospectus, as well as an admission form, if possible. I enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope for your convenience. Thank you.

Sincerely,

(Including a self-addressed stamped envelope is a nice touch and demonstrates your seriousness.)



Simple enough. In most cases, all you need to do is fill in the blanks for a customized letter. So go ahead and do it. Get a head start on the rest of your life!

making connections

Applying Other Professional Skills to Special Needs

So you want to help people with disabilities, but you don't really want to be a special educator, or a physiotherapist or a developmental pediatrician. What you really want to be is an architect, or a musician, or a fashion designer.

NO PROBLEM

Almost any career can have a special needs link, provided the person is committed to making it happen. This chapter is directed at those who are either established in a profession other than Special Needs, or are on their way there. It addresses those who feel the need to "make a difference" and to "give something back" purely out of a sense of social commitment. You may not want to make a full-time career in Special Needs, but regardless of which profession you head towards, you can be sure that with a little imagination, you will be able to apply your skills in Special Needs as well. Here is a list of some of the more popular career choices today and the manner in which the skills they call for can be adapted to benefit people with special needs.

Mass Communications



Here's to you! Your skills lie in presenting ideas to the masses. Change comes about only when there is a certain level of awareness. You have the tools and ability to use elements of the media to create that awareness and influence public opinion.

Now how about... applying your skills to spread the word. We all have special needs at some stage in our lives - a woman with a little child has special needs; a man with a sprained ankle has special needs; a senior citizen has special needs... With some people, these needs are more obvious, because they are created by a visible physical or mental disability. People with special needs don't need pity; they need acceptance and action.

Just do it! Write that article, make that film, stage that play! Tell the world the truth about what's going on and what should be going on. Tell it like it is!



Software Programming/ Computer Engineering



Here's to you! Java is an island to some and a coffee brand to others; to you, it's your daily bread. You inhabit a world that will someday run the world and gently convince the uninitiated that HTML is not the younger brother of MTNL. It's people like you who made the term 'computer nerd' fashionable once again.

Now how about... using your specialised knowledge and technological know-how to bring about dramatic changes in the lives of people who are most vulnerable?

Just do it! Adapt your skills to support people with special needs by designing and creating special equipment such as Braille keyboards and voice-activated software. Computer software is already being used to great effect in fields such as speech therapy. There is a growing demand for everything from web site development to computerised doors and wheelchairs with built-in computer chips. What are *you* doing about it?

Fashion Designing

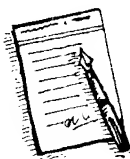


Here's to you! Who better than you to explain the subtle difference between chikankari and chicken curry? You, who are equally at home in the glamorous world of haute couture as in the dark and dingy textile manufacturing units, you who are accustomed to filling the lives of people with beauty and colour.

Now how about... putting that sewing kit to some very special use? People with special needs come in all shapes, sizes, colours, genders and abilities. You could play a big role in boosting their self-esteem and generally making their lives a lot easier.

Just do it! Just because a person has a disability does not mean s/he couldn't care less about his or her appearance. Unfortunately the constraints imposed by a physical disability might make wearing certain clothes difficult, if not impossible. Garments that incorporate velcro strips instead of buttons for people who have problems manipulating small objects, bibs that are attractive but not babyish for older people who tend to drool, etc are just two small examples of clothing that makes life easier for an entire population with special needs. Or how about having models with disabilities on the ramp or in the studio at your next fashion show or shoot? The American toy company "Toys R Us" does it, and apart from the fact that their sales have gone up, they've also received kudos for promoting the concept of a more accepting, inclusive society.

Law

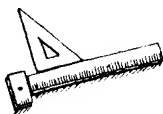


Here's to you! You're the legal eagle, the inspiration behind some of the world's most popular TV shows. You have the courage of your convictions. When you take a stand, you defend it irrespective of popular opinion.

Now how about... using your powers of persuasion to convince the world that people with special needs have the same rights as everyone else? People with disabilities cannot always speak up for themselves, but one sure yardstick by which to measure any society is the living standard it accords its weakest and most vulnerable members.

Just do it! People with special needs are often discriminated against. One of the most practical ways to bring about change is by ensuring that the rights of people with disabilities are strongly protected by law. It takes aware, intelligent and progressive individuals to stand up and speak for a section of society that cannot always speak up for itself. One of those individuals could be you! Stand up and be counted!

Architecture

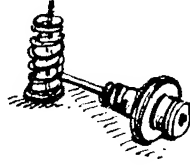


Here's to you! Designing people's homes and workplaces is your dream. Your forte lies in understanding the needs of the people you work with and giving concrete shape to their castles in the air.

Now how about... propagating the concept of accessibility among your clients? A person in a wheelchair would be able to move independently everywhere if it weren't for stairs, for instance. Public buildings with neither elevators nor ramps are as good as closed to people in wheelchairs, who are left with the option of either staying home or requesting the assistance of absolute strangers.

Just do it! How about making yourself available to organisations and institutions on the hunt for an architect sensitive to the needs of people with disabilities? If that's not feasible, you could make a big start with just one little step - suggest features such as ramps, elevators and wider doorways to your corporate clients. It could start them thinking, and who knows where that could lead!

Mechanical Engineering



Here's to you! You're the kind of designer that the world depends upon for everything from a paper clip to a car. From the most mundane to the most aerodynamic, if it cuts/joins/moves/opens/shuts or does just about anything of earthly use, chances are it's been designed by a mechanical engineer.

Now how about... using all that knowledge of how things work to design things for people with special needs? Someone made a great start by designing a chair with wheels, thanks to which countless people can now get around without having to be carried. That first model of a wheelchair has evolved into dozens and dozens of shapes, designs, functions and colours - and it's only one of the many aids around.

Just do it! There is a huge range of aids for people with special needs, but many are so expensive that people in India just can't afford them. However, thanks to the thoughtfulness and talent of some engineers there **are** excellent and affordable aids available locally. How about checking them out to see what still needs to be done? And then put your own talent to work designing the next thing - the one that will change someone's whole life!



real people are already doing it!

The ideas given above are just ideas, but in real life, it is already happening. Here are just a few examples of people connected to our school, whose main work has nothing to do with ours.

Avinash Pasricha is a well-known photographer who spent most of his working life as director of photography at SPAN magazine in New Delhi. As a freelancer, he specializes in photographing dancers, musicians, fashion models and children with special needs. For the last five years he has been visiting Karuna Vihar to take pictures of the children at play and work. We have used his slides in our Awareness Campaign, in our brochures and publicity material and, most important, in our annual calendar. We would be lost without his expertise, and we could never afford to pay for it!

Kusum Kanwar is a college lecturer with a Master's degree in Education and an incredible talent for organizing. She came to us because she liked our style and we latched on to her because we loved hers. Using her wide experience with college and school going children, she assists in our career guidance workshops as well as our general awareness programmes. She is also responsible for our many public events and brings a new element of charm and sophistication to all of them.

Prashant Upadhyaya is a pediatric surgeon by profession. In-between operations, he finds time to drop into Karuna Vihar to make adjustments in one child's calipers or to repair another's broken wheelchair. He advises us on computer problems and helps with translations, leaky taps and faulty wiring. He uses his wide contacts in the medical community in Dehradun to get us the best advice available on everything from hearing aids to blood tests.

Deepa Bhushan works as a Human Resources Development professional with a large company in Delhi. A specialist in Communication skills, she has led several workshops for the Karuna Vihar staff, helping us to determine the direction in which the school should develop and to establish better systems for working together harmoniously and productively.

Kartwarjit Chawla is the CEO of a construction company in Delhi. A civil engineer, he has always had a special love for children with disabilities. His niece has a form of Downs' Syndrome and his god-daughter has a severe mental handicap. He spends a lot of time with both these children and devotes considerable energy to Karuna Vihar. He advises us on structural problems in our building, helps with any construction projects we have in hand (from a doll's house to a new roof for our verandah, from a wheelchair ramp to climbing equipment), funds us both routinely and in emergencies, and provides us, through his office, with secretarial, chauffeuring and delivery services whenever we are in Delhi on work.



Shalini Sinha is a Dehradun based artist and graphic designer who works with Karuna Vihar, helping us to design our newsletter, calendars, brochures and booklets like this one. Recently she helped us design and execute a mural on the back wall of the school which has become something of a tourist attraction. It was, ironically, her work for Karuna Vihar, which she does at a substantial discount, that attracted the notice of a large company who offered her a consulting position!

Loveleen Modi is the Managing Director of one of Dehradun's big hotels. Whenever the hotel has a special function, like their Christmas or Baisaki mela, she remembers the KV kids and sends a personal invitation for us to attend as her guests. Everything, from games and rides to lunch, cold drinks and ice cream, is on the house - for the children, it's like a trip to fairyland where all their wishes come true.

Virender Gulati owns one of Dehradun's busiest bakeries. His support for the work of the school expresses itself in a number of creative and interesting ways, from providing free pastries and tarts for school functions to giving counterspace in the bakery for our fundraising unit to sell its products during the Christmas rush, from selling calendars for us himself (no one can say no to him!) to setting up donation boxes by his cash registers.

Ravi Chopra is the director of an NGO based in Dehradun, devoted to bringing science to the villages. The father of a little girl with a mental handicap and a metallurgical engineer by training, he is now a full-time researcher-activist, and an expert on the ins and outs of running an organization. He spends a great deal of his time going over our accounts, putting us in touch with funding agencies and big donors, helping us sort out staff problems and generally trouble-shooting.

Get the idea ? There is really no limit to the way you can get involved in Special Needs, even if you are planning on a career which seems unrelated. So stay in touch with your local special school or vocational unit - you never know when inspiration will strike!



rehabilitation today



The Scene in India

The field of rehabilitation is both vast and complex and professionals in its various disciplines often hold very strong views on the best ways to work. While as a young person considering a career in Special Needs, it is not important for you to understand all of the ins and outs of the many different controversies in the field, there are still some basic issues of which you should be aware:

- ◆ No one knows just how many disabled people there are in India. No reliable survey has ever been conducted even for the total number of people affected by any handicap, let alone breaking it down into specifics (i.e. mentally handicapped, visually impaired, etc.). According to U.N. agencies, 10% of the population of any developing country is disabled. NGOs working in India offer a lower figure of 6%. Many professionals, however, would include people with milder learning disabilities, in which case the number may be as high as 20%. But even the most conservative guess still gives us a staggering figure to deal with: 6%, in a country the size of India, translates into **6 million people** with some kind of significant disability. The 2001 Census, which is also going to record the incidence of disability in the country, will hopefully give us a better picture.
- ◆ In India, services for the disabled tend to be concentrated in the large cities, particularly the Metros. People with disabilities who live in smaller towns or the rural areas may need to travel long distances for assessment and therapy. Management of most disabilities is a long-term process but many poor people are unable to make repeated visits to a referral centre and therefore cannot benefit fully from the services available.
- ◆ The large government hospitals in the big cities are the places that most people go for specialised help. Referral to other NGOs and private organisations and professionals also takes place. The scarce and scattered services vary from town to town and although the physician is the first person families go to for help, many doctors may not be aware of what is available locally. In addition, disability rehabilitation information is not included in the standard medical training in our country, so there is no uniformity in the initial advice given at the time of diagnosing a disability. It is all a matter of luck.
- ◆ The difficulties in meeting the long-term needs of so many of the people who come to them for assistance has led rehabilitation professionals to search for a better way to



deliver services, particularly in the villages and in urban slums. This has led to the development of *Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR)* which is gaining strength in developing countries.

- ◆ CBR is based on the premise that people in a community should be responsible for their own health and that given some very basic skills, they are capable of maintaining it. This approach involves training members of the community as health workers. One of the most important things they learn is how to *identify disability*. CBR workers, because they live in the community and meet their neighbours on a daily basis, are well placed to spot a problem in its early stages and initiate therapy, referring to specialists when necessary. The local health worker then remains actively involved in the child's care and therapy.
- ◆ While the CBR approach may seem very different from the hospital based medical approach, in reality, the two are both essential parts of a whole. One cannot do without the other and practitioners of both have much to learn from each other. To maintain the standards of quality in services for the disabled of which the human race is now capable, highly trained professionals, based in hospitals and research centres, are essential. But to ensure that all that expertise and knowledge gets out to the people who need it, we cannot do without primary services at a local level.
- ◆ Early intervention is the single most important factor in reducing the adverse effect of a handicap, but even the most committed parents cannot get help for their child unless they know there is a problem. Only a minority of children with disability are detected early in India; most are at school age before parents seek appropriate help with their child's problem. One of the biggest difficulties is the lack of information about disability services. A lot of good work is happening in pockets but often too few know about it. There is no formal system for collecting and updating local resource information.
- ◆ The community approach is effective not only at the individual level in terms of services offered, but at the larger community level as well because of the significant degree to which awareness of health and disability issues is raised. As people come to understand the nature of disability, they learn how much of it can be prevented by good nutrition, hygiene and safe birth practices.
- ◆ There is an urgent need for quality regional training for rehabilitation professionals in every town in India. This is necessary if basic level disability services are to exist in small towns. At present organisations providing services for the disabled in small towns have to either recruit professionals from out of town, send staff who are prepared to travel to the nearest training course, conduct in-service training or simply manage without any training.



- ◆ The government has been making an attempt to regulate rehabilitation work and improve conditions for the disabled. The Disability Act was passed in 1995 following which there have been new schemes for employment of people with disabilities. The Rehabilitation Council of India (RCI) was formed in the early 1990's by the Ministry of Social Welfare with the aim of regulating disability personnel and training.
- ◆ Rehabilitation involves the integration of people with disabilities into mainstream life. It means that they need to be educated and learn to lead as independent a life as possible. This requires society to be educated about disability in order for social attitudes to change and so that disabled people are not excluded.
- ◆ In devising therapeutic programmes to enhance a child's abilities, professionals need to keep in mind the family's environment and its particular problems. Otherwise it becomes difficult for the family to incorporate the necessary changes into their daily routine.
- ◆ Parental counseling is vital to help parents understand that disability is nothing to be ashamed of and that the earlier therapy and special education is started, the more the child will benefit and grow to be confident of his/her abilities. Most of all, we as a society have to learn that disability is nothing to fear and that a person with a disability is still a person, just like anyone else.



organisations worth a visit

This section is probably the most personal in the entire booklet. Although our opinions and beliefs are certainly evident throughout, we have tried to maintain some professional distance and to include all of the conventional disciplines (and some unconventional ones, too) in the field of Special Needs. In this section, however, we have decided to include only those organisations and institutions which we have personally visited and which impressed us for one reason or another. This means, obviously, that many wonderful places are not included - India is an enormous country! Even with a team five times the size of ours, and all the time and energy in the world, we would still not be able to get to every organization "worth a visit". So this is necessarily a selective list which reflects our own personal experiences. Visit our choices if you get a chance, but bear in mind that there are many more out there. Make your own list, and share it with us!

Please Note: Many organisations have had to limit visitors so as to be able to actually do the work the visitors are coming to see! **Do call and make an appointment** before going to any of the places listed here. Because these capsule descriptions are our own personal opinions, we have put our initials beside each one (Ap=Aparna Bhonsle; JC=Jo Chopra)

DEEPSHIKHA, RANCHI

The first place I ever visited before we started Karuna Vihar was this small school in Ranchi. The support and practical advice I received was so encouraging that I will always have a warm feeling for the lovely people I met there and for the excellent work they are doing. Deepshikha is a school for children with multiple handicaps, including Autism. Because of the number of trained professionals on their staff, they are able to offer an NIMH course for Special Educators which supplies their own constant need for teachers. Deepshikha is especially fortunate in the number of volunteers and community supporters it is able to attract. (JC)

NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND NEUROSCIENCE, BANGALORE

Jo and I have both visited NIMHANS over the last 2 years. In sheer size and professional activity the impact of the institute is staggering. The National Institute for Mental Health and Neurosciences is the premier institute in the country engaged in pioneering multidisciplinary work in the field of the human mind. This involves training professionals at the post graduate, doctorate and post-doctorate level; conducting advanced research into the relationship between the human brain, human mind and human behaviour; and providing quality clinical and rehabilitative services to people with mental health problems, childhood disorders and neurological disorders. Patients come from all over the country



and some families who require long term management are provided with accommodation. The Department of Psychology is one of the few places in India where clinical psychologists can train to a doctorate level. A wide range of postgraduate courses are available at NIMHANS and students come from all over India in many specialities like biophysics, neuropathology, clinical psychology, psychiatric social work, psychiatry and many more. Hostel life is varied and interesting. A lot of collaborative work is with other local, national and international organizations and there are workshops and seminars providing on-going training to professionals. (Ap)

DILKUSH, MUMBAI:

Dilkush is a well-established school for children with mental handicaps. It is a large institution, and is housed in a beautifully maintained building on spacious grounds. What I loved about the place was its atmosphere of professional confidence: all of the teachers and staff seem to know exactly what they are doing. Dilkush offers a recognized training course for Special Educators and also runs a full-scale sheltered workshop for adults who have graduated from the school. It is cheerful, bright and totally matter-of-fact. When entering the campus I was struck by how much like a normal school it appeared. It is a wonderful example of how things should (and one day *will*) be. (JC)

SAPLINGS, MUMBAI:

Saplings is a very unusual school in that it is dedicated solely to the education of the "slow learner". Slow learners are children who appear quite normal in most respects and can learn in conventional ways as long as they are given adequate time. It was a revelation to see children, who in normal schools would have been failures, succeeding in a wide variety of activities and thriving as a result. And because they were learning in an environment which suited their abilities, it was hard to see that they had any difficulties at all. The poise and self-esteem of the students was remarkable and their social skills were enviable. The school's approach to education is practical and result-oriented: students are trained in skills they can use to actually get jobs that will suit them. Typing, sewing and computer work are all part of the curriculum. Saplings shares campus space with a normal school and interaction among the children is encouraged. (JC)

KPAMRC, BANGALORE

The Karnataka Parent Association for Mentally Retarded Citizens is a group of very dynamic individuals who have been working for the mentally handicapped for the last 20 years. They are a good example of what a group of parents can achieve if they work together towards a common cause. Mr J.P. Gadkari, the secretary, told me how they started the vocational training out of their own homes in the early days. Today the KPAMRC



conducts training courses for both parents and professionals, produces a regular, very well-written newsletter, and provides a range of vocational training for adults with mental handicaps. What I enjoyed about my visit was the open and friendly manner in which they responded to all my questions and the opportunity I got to discuss disability issues. (Ap)

SNDT, MUMBAI:

SNDT is a large women's university located in the Santa Cruz suburb of Mumbai. Its department of child development offers an excellent degree course in Special Education and as part of the course, operates a special school for children with multiple handicaps right on the university campus. This school is a delightful place, at least in part because of being situated in the middle of a lively, eager group of young women, many of whom volunteer as aides in their spare time. The course, which is recognized by the RCI and extremely well-respected throughout India, is taught by some of the country's leading professionals in the field of medicine, psychology and child development. (JC)

APD- Association of People with Disability, BANGALORE

APD is a small hive of activity with a warm and friendly atmosphere. People are able to take time out to talk about their work. The person whose morning I disrupted the most was Mr. Basavaraj, who was kind enough to ensure that I saw every single project in the compound. The most notable is the vocational training centre that trains disabled people for a number of jobs like draughtsman, electrician, office skills, horticulture. This training is recognized by many employers locally. The training course for orthotic appliances and physiotherapy assistants has been specially designed for people who will be working in villages. Candidates from all over the developing world come to learn about how to help people with physical handicaps. Students are taught to make orthotic appliances like calipers, special shoes, etc. from locally available material.

In addition there is a little primary school for handicapped children where learning is made into an enjoyable experience. (Ap)

CHILDREN'S ORTHOPAEDIC HOSPITAL, MUMBAI

This hospital is unique in its ability to provide a holistic multi disciplinary service to children with orthopaedic problems. Every member of the team from the surgeon to the social worker, the therapist to the special teacher are under one roof and available to the children who are admitted to the wards for operations on their limbs. There is also a special unit that produces custom made orthotic appliances. In one of the wings of the building are the operating theatres and in the other there is a school providing remedial education for slow learners and children with specific learning difficulties which prepares them for the board exams.



AIIMPR, Mumbai

Just next door to the children's orthopaedic hospital is the All India Institute of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation. It is a busy Government Hospital which provides help with all aspects of treatment and rehabilitation for people with physical disabilities. People come from all over the region for expert help. Training courses are run in a variety of specialized subjects including prosthetic and orthotic technology. (Ap)

SPJ SADHANA SCHOOL, Mumbai,

Sadhna School is in the Sophia girls' college campus. The warm and friendly atmosphere practically envelops you as you enter. Sister Gaitonde is in charge and she takes a personal interest in every visitor. The school is for children with developmental handicaps, "the ones no one else will take" was what I was told. As a result they have many children with autism and over the years they have developed a lot of experience in this area. There is a well developed occupational therapy department. I was very interested to meet Ms. Radhika Khanna, who had completed a doctorate study on the application of art therapy with the mentally handicapped. She has been with the school for many years now and has been instrumental in setting up a very remarkable vocational training programme. Great thought has gone into the designing of their catering department, office skills unit, as well as the art and design unit. It was refreshing and inspiring to meet everyone at SPJ Sadhna School and it is definitely worth visiting. (Ap)

HELLEN KELLER INSTITUTE FOR THE DEAF-BLIND, MUMBAI

The first impression of this place is very similar to a regular government school. But on my second visit, I saw things differently. While the special school for blind children is admirable, it was the unit for the deaf-blind which really impressed me. It is worth spending a little time here trying to imagine what the world would seem like if you could neither hear nor see. The problems of deaf-blind children are unique. Read any book about the early life of Helen Keller and you will see how an active intelligent mind can be isolated in a dark silent world. The deaf-blind can learn to communicate through touch. A special sign language has evolved in the Helen Keller Institutes across the world. The Mumbai institute is the first of its kind and is one of the few places in the country actively working for the cause of the deaf-blind in India. As a response to the lack of training in India for teachers working with the multiply handicapped, this institute has just started a new course for teachers of the deaf-blind. (Ap)

JAN MADHYAM, NEW DELHI

Jan Madhyam is based in Delhi but operates in the rural area as well. It is an activist organisation which provides job training and life skills (including traffic sense, sex education,



and social skills) to young adults with mental, hearing, visual and physical handicaps. In its rural centre, Jan Madhyam provides an integrated training program for both handicapped and non-handicapped young women. The organisation has a friendly, down-to-earth approach and is particularly open to visitors, especially those sincere about starting something themselves. (JC)

INSTITUTE OF CEREBRAL PALSY, CALCUTTA

I thoroughly enjoyed my visit to the Institute of Cerebral Palsy, better known as the Spastic Society of Eastern India. Like its sister organizations across the country, it has also been running for well over 20 years. What struck me the most was that in spite of growing and expanding it has managed to retain the homely atmosphere that exists in organizations while they are small and young.

There is a special school, an excellent adult vocational training centre and job placement programme, a teacher training centre and an out-reach programme. The SSEI provides a variety of courses training professionals at all levels. The use of computer technology and special augmentative communication devices is extremely well-developed. The publication department has produced a range of excellent books, information leaflets and videos on a range of subjects related to cerebral palsy. (Ap)

MUSKAAN, NEW DELHI

Muskaan is a fantastic, upbeat place which provides employment to over a hundred adults with mental and physical handicaps. Housed in a basement flat in Hauz Khas, it is almost impossible to believe there are so many people in one place. There is an atmosphere of quiet purpose which prevails and each individual is intent on her/his work. The focus is on traditional crafts - Muskaan produces candles, batik and screen prints, paper bags, cards and other stationery items. Friday afternoons the work stops and everyone participates in social events like dancing, sing-alongs and games. (JC)

REACH

This is a well known disability organization in Calcutta. The building is multi-storied with classes for children with different disabilities on different floors.

There is a multidisciplinary team taking care of all aspects of rehabilitation. In addition there is a teacher training programme and a village outreach programme. You get to a chance to interact with children of all ages with different problems, all of whom are most interested to know who you are and why you have come! (Ap)



CINI - Child in Need Institute, Calcutta

I was keen to visit at least one of the CINI offices and find out about the work they do with street children. Unlike most other organizations I have visited which consist of dynamic women, the CINI office seems to be all men. There is a quiet purposeful energy about the place and even though I was an unexpected visitor, I felt welcomed.

CINI reaches out to over 3000 street children in Calcutta. Even though they are not working with children with disabilities, we found a lot of common ground. They have helped make education and training available to homeless street children and helped many of them find worthwhile jobs, lead independent lives and become contributing members of society. I found their ideas and results exceptional and they had an openness to new people and new ideas which was very inspiring. (Ap)

TAMANA, NEW DELHI

Tamana is a school for children with multiple physical and mental handicaps, including a fairly large number of children with Autism. Tamana is a warm and welcoming place and the students seem genuinely happy to be there. It offers a recognized course for Special Educators and has apartments available for its students to stay for real-life experiences of housekeeping, cooking and entertaining. Because of its intense involvement with children with Autism, Tamana is a good source for people who want to learn more about it. (JC)

WAI AKSHAR INSTITUTE

Wai is a tiny little township full of temples, an hour south of Pune. Not where you would expect to find an institute like Wai Akshar - a multiplex containing a special school for children with handicaps, a therapy centre, a vocational unit and an NIMH regional training centre. The heart and soul of the organization is Dr Ashutosh Pandit, an Occupational Therapist. Talking with him one gets a very holistic picture of disability services in Maharashtra and a wider picture of the work that needs to be done by all professionals at a national level.

Dr. Pandit's belief is that the training given in some city based institutions was better suited to the urban context and that professionals trained in these environments were not always able to transfer their knowledge to be effective in rural areas like the trainees from smaller rural institutes. (Ap)



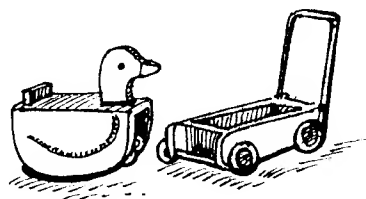
Spastics Society of Northern India

Oh, the Spastics Society! There is probably no organisation in the country that I feel more indebted to. Both as a mother (my daughter was part of the SSNI's Home Management program) and as a would-be school director seeking guidance, the Spastics Society has never let me down. From the caring, intensely practical and compassionate advice that an anxious parent needs to the detailed and concrete guidance that a fledgling organisation requires, SSNI has it all. The spirit that pervades the place is a remarkable combination of professional expertise and human kindness. I'll leave it to Aparna to provide the details! (JC)

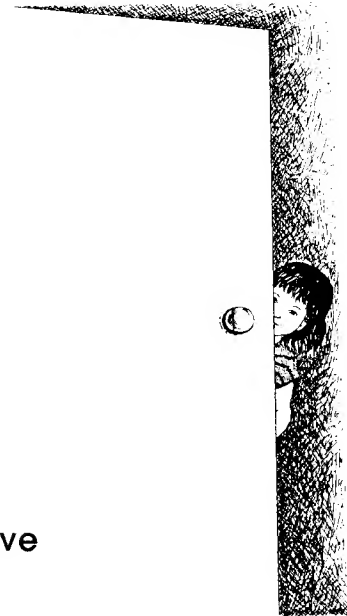
Spastics Society of Northern India, Delhi

Well! The SSNI is more like a home to me. I literally grew up with the organization as my mother worked there for many years and I volunteered as a teenager in the days when they operated out of a small flat. Today their red brick building is big enough to get lost in. SSNI has a special place in my heart as I have learnt a lot about courage there, about the unique problems faced by people with cerebral palsy and by their families, about alternate and augmentative communication, about the wonders of special furniture and equipment, all of which have made me a better therapist as I certainly didn't get these opportunities from either my training in India or my postgraduation in England.

Like the other Spastic Societies across India, SSNI is a centre of excellence for the management of neuro-motor disorders. Services include a special school; a vocational training project, and a home management programme for out of town parents who come from all over the northern region to get advice for their children. There is a recognized teacher training course and an exceptional developmental therapy course. There also is an extraordinary carpentry workshop that makes special furniture for children with severe physical difficulties.



**“choose a job you love and you’ll never
have to work a day in your life”**



Looking at the Future from a New Perspective

So what do you want to be when you grow up? It's all ahead of you now: the excitement, the uncertainty, the sense of new horizons and dreams coming true - your life unfolding before you. And the most frightening, most wonderful thing of all is that it is in your hands - it's your life. You get to choose how it will be.

This awareness, that your life is in your hands, is the first and most important thing you need to know. It is the people who really believe this, and act on it, whose lives are the most fulfilling. You can go through your life believing that others - your parents, your boss, your children, your in-laws, your spouse - are in control, but it simply isn't true. Once you understand this, everything changes.

The things we choose ourselves are the things we believe in. Choosing work we believe in transforms a job from a dreary, meaningless activity to a vibrant, lively expression of ourselves. The quote above (it's Confucius who said it, and everyone knows how smart *he* was) is true: when you love your work, it doesn't feel like work. You wake up every morning charged with energy, ready to begin another day filled with promise.

A career in Special Needs may be just what you have been looking for. As this booklet makes clear, it is a field which has something for just about everyone. Whether you are inclined to science, commerce or the arts, you can find work in Special Needs which will be challenging, rewarding and satisfying. You will find colleagues who will become life-long friends, parents who will win your respect and admiration and people with disabilities who will astonish you with their determination, strength and resilience.



But there's more



A country which is able to deal with disability in a positive way is a country with both maturity and depth. Caught up in the battle to simply feed and house its millions of citizens, India has, for many years, been unable to spare either the time or the energy for its people who require even more. Now, however, things are changing. India is on the threshold of a new and hopeful era in which those who have for too long been marginalized and forgotten are at last being brought into the centre.

All over the country, awareness is growing that people with disabilities have the same rights as anyone else, that a handicap need not be the defining fact of a person's life and that it is the responsibility of the larger community to ensure both these things. People who choose to work in the field of disability, in whatever capacity, find themselves in the forefront of this movement for social change - a movement with almost unbelievable potential. It has been said that a nation can be judged by the way it treats its weakest, most vulnerable members. There is, perhaps, no one more vulnerable than a child with a mental or physical handicap. If India can give that child the kind of life she deserves, who knows what else will be possible?

To choose a career in the field of rehabilitation is to choose to be part of a new vision, a new direction, for a country badly in need of both. **No one** is expendable. Every human being is essential. If we exclude one group today, it will be another's turn tomorrow. Sooner or later, it will be our own.

In the end, then, it comes down to a new vision for ourselves. Although we wrote this booklet to encourage you to think of a career in Special Needs, if you finish reading it knowing that you *really, really want* a career in something totally different, we will be delighted. Because what we really, really believe in is the importance of each individual person. If you choose a career because it's what you really want to do, then you'll do a good job. You'll love your work. And can you imagine what would happen to this country if **everyone** loved their work?

So believe in yourself. Believe in the power of your dream. Look to others for advice, for guidance, for encouragement along the way. But look to yourself for the answers.

Books to Read



1. **“Seeing Voices”** Oliver Sacks (A fascinating glimpse into the community of the hearing handicapped and the language they share)
2. **“The Man Who Mistook His Wife For A Hat”**- Oliver Sacks (about unusual neurological problems where the brain “plays tricks”.)
3. **“Climb Every Mountain - Radhika’s Story”** by Indeera Chand (An inspiring story of an Indian family whose daughter has Downs syndrome)
4. **“For the Love of Ann”** - Jack Copland (The gripping story of a child with Autism whose parents refused to accept the doctors’ grim prognosis for her and instead crafted a miracle.)
5. **“My Left Foot”**- Christy Brown (the brilliant autobiography of a man with severe cerebral palsy)
6. **“My Autobiography”** by Helen Keller (the unforgettable story of the woman whose triumph over disability - she was blind, deaf and mute - continues to inspire the entire world)
7. **“Dibs in Search of Self”** by Virginia Axline (A compelling story of the relationship between a child with severe emotional problems and his therapist)
8. **“To Kill a Mocking Bird”** - Harper Lee (a beautifully written story about racism and prejudice as seen through the eyes of a little girl. A sub-plot contains an account of a man with a mental disability who is tormented by the children of the town but finally accepted and loved)
9. **“I’m OK You’re OK”** - Thomas Harris (One of the earliest “pop psychology” books, it has helped many people to understand some of the reasons for the behaviour of others)

Videos to Watch (English)



1. **My Left Foot** (see above)
2. **Children of a Lesser God** - starring William Hurt (story of a school for teenagers with hearing handicaps)



3. **Rainman** - starring Dustin Hoffman and Tom Cruise (about the relationship between a man with autism and his brother)
4. **Lorenzo's Oil** - starring Susan Sarandon and Nick Nolte (the emotionally painful true story of a child with a rare degenerative disorder and his parents' fight to save his life)
5. **A Patch of Blue** - starring Sidney Poitier (the story of a young blind woman from a broken home who is befriended by a black man and who must confront her own racism and that of her family when she discovers his colour)
6. **Teacher, Teacher** (the story of Annie Sullivan, Helen Keller's teacher, who was herself visually handicapped)
7. **Awakenings** (a fascinating story of a whole ward of mentally ill patients who, under the influence of a new drug, temporarily returned to "sanity")
8. **Forrest Gump** (the story of a slow learner, his mother's belief in him, and his journey - often very comical - through life)
9. **One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest** - starring Jack Nicholson (The story of a man who is mistakenly committed to a mental institution and his subsequent fight for the rights of the patients)
10. **The Horse Whisperer** - starring Robert Redford (the story of a young girl who loses her leg in an accident and regains her emotional stability through her relationship with horses)
11. **Girl Interrupted** - (Oscar award winning film about a young woman in a mental institution)

Videos to Watch (Hindi)



1. **Khamoshi** - Manisha Koirala (about deaf parents and their normal hearing daughter)
2. **Khilona** - Sanjeev Kumar, Mumtaz (how a disabled person can blossom in a loving environment)
3. **Anjali** - Revati (about a mentally handicapped little girl)
4. **Dosti** - (about the friendship between blind man and a man with a physical handicap)
5. **Koshish** - (about two deaf people who fall in love)



6. **Koshish Ek Aasha Hai-** (TV serial about the social attitudes to disability)
7. **Sadma** - Sridevi, Kamal Hassan (about a young girl who loses her memory following a head injury)
8. **Nache Mayuri** - Sudha Chandran, Shekhar Suman (how a young dancer overcomes the loss of her leg in a car accident)
9. **Sparsh** - (the struggle and success of a blind man)
10. **Anand** - Rajesh Khanna (about the courage of a person dying of leukemia)
11. **Appu Raja-** Kamal Hassan (about the social stigma attached to dwarfism)
12. **Mere Baad** - Anupam Kher Rakhee (a woman facing her death finds homes for her children)

We apologise for not including films in other regional languages.



Directory

Organization	Address	Services provided	Course information
Ali Yavar Jung National Institute for the hearing Handicapped	Kishenchand Marg, Bandra (West) Mumbai - 400050	One of the 4 autonomous national institutes providing facilities for the hearing and speech disabled and technical support to organisations all over the country. This involves training professionals, research, development of material, and rehabilitation service delivery	BA Education of the Hearing Impaired RCI Dip. In education of the hearing impaired RCI Dip. In Communication Disorders RCI BSc Audiology and Speech Pathology RCI MSc Speech Therapy Short term training courses
All India Institute of Medical Sciences	Ansari Nagar, New Delhi - 110029	One of the best known medical training institutes. It offers some paramedical training. Most of the trainees are absorbed into the busy clinical setting. The Rehabilitation Unit of Audiology and Speech (RUAS) housed in the ENT wing of the out-patient department provides hearing testing, hearing aid guidance and speech therapy for children and adults with speech and hearing difficulties.	BSc Speech and Hearing RCI BSc Ophthalmic Technology RCI MBBS
All India Institute of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation	Haji Ali Park, Khadye Marg, Mahakakshmi, Mumbai - 40003	A highly specialized hospital providing multidisciplinary input to people with physical disabilities. This includes surgery, physiotherapy, speech therapy, contact with a medical social worker, orthotic and prosthetic fittings etc.	BSc in Prosthetics and Orthotics RCI



Organization	Address	Services provided	Course information
All India Institute of Speech and Hearing	Manas Gangotri, Mysore, Karnataka - 576006	AIISH was the first academic institute to provide training for speech therapists and audiologists in India. Many of the well-known professionals in the field today have been associated with it. There are well developed departments for every aspect of speech and hearing and in which research projects are constantly being conducted.	BSc Speech Pathology and Audiology RCI MSc Speech and Hearing RCI It is the only institute where speech and audiology studies can be done to a doctorate level.
Alpha to Omega	12 Gajapathy Road, Kilpark, Chennai - 600010	This organisation has been very highly recommended by some colleagues we respect. Multidisciplinary services are provided for the education of children with Learning Disability. This involves assessment; remedial instruction; special school; summer programmes; awareness programmes etc	Training is conducted for · Tutors · Resource teachers In addition short courses and parent workshops are held.
Amarjyoti Rehabilitation and Research Centre	Vikas Marg, Karkar Dooma, Delhi - 110092	They provide rehabilitative services including- integrated education; therapy; vocational training for people with disabilities; urban slum CBR projects.	Diploma in Special Education (mental Retardation) Foundation course in CBR Workshops in various disciplines





Organization	Address	Services provided	Course information
Association for People with Disabilities	Hennur Road, Lingarajapuram, St Thomas Town PO, Bangalore - 560084	This organization is over 40 years old, yet there is a freshness to the atmosphere and work going on. There is an integrated school called Shradhanjali . Community based rehabilitation approach and training of grassroot workers in the development of orthotic appliances and basic physiotherapy.	Orthotic Technicians course. Physiotherapy aids/assistants There is a unique Industrial Training Centre which trains people with disabilities to become welders, electronic assemblers/fitters and draughtsmen. A horticultural training programme is also available.
Arushi	96/9A Saket Nagar, Bhopal-462024 (M.P.)	Arushi is engaged in the employment and training of the handicapped (including computer courses for visually impaired using screen reading software); facilities for recording instructional material on audio cassettes; Awareness/integration and social mobilisation work as well as training of regular government teachers	Although there is no formal course available, their approach to tailoring their services for the visually handicapped is unusual. They do conduct in-service training for other organisations and have been recommended by smaller organisations in Madhya Pradesh.
Association for the Welfare of the Mentally Handicapped	Administrative Office, Turner Morrison House (Basement), Maharashtra	This association has done a lot over the last 25 years in coordinating the work done by many individuals and organizations for the mentally handicapped. They have worked actively at a grassroots level especially in the slums.	They offer 'doorstep' facilities through six clinics in different parts of Bombay, provide help with transport fare, conduct parental training and emphasize early intervention.

Organization	Address	Services provided	Course information
Blind People's Association	Dr Vikram Sarabhai Road, Vastrapur, Ahmedabad - 380 015, Gujarat	BPA offers vocational and pre-vocational training for adults with disabilities.	D.S.E. Visually Handicapped RCI
Birla Institute of Technical Science	Pilani, Rajasthan-333031	Sorry! No information at hand regarding this institute	Bsc Optometry
Child Care Centre	Gandhi Nagar, Near Fire Station, Kochi - 682020	This organisation is specifically for children with learning disabilities. The centre assesses them, identifies learning problems like dyslexia and develops remedial programmes to help them improve their academic performance.	The training from this centre is more likely to be targeted at mainstream teachers and parents, however we have not verified whether the Kochi centre conducts formal courses for remedial teachers.
Children's Orthopaedic Hospital	Haji Ali, Mahalaxmi, Mumbai-400034	Multi-disciplinary out-patient and inpatient service for children with physical disabilities + a school providing remedial education for children with learning difficulties.	No information about training courses run by the Childrens Orthopaedic hospital. (see worth a visit)
Christian Medical College	P.O. Thorapudi, Vellore, 632002, Tamilnadu	One of the best known medical training institutes. Highly recommended by professionals everywhere for the disability work done here. Therapists trained here are valued all over the country for their high quality service delivery.	Diploma in Prosthetics and Orthotic Engineering RCI BSc Physical and Occupational Therapy RCI MBBS



Organization	Address	Services provided	Course information
CINI - ASHA (Child In Need Institute)	P.O. Box No. 16742, Calcutta - 700027	This is one of a group of dynamic organizations started in 1989, to work with street children by first providing them with shelter, health and nutritional facilities, then educating and training them and eventually helping them find jobs. They also do community based work in rural areas.	They conduct workshops on child abuse and child labour. Material available for child to child method of education
Clarks' School for the Deaf	'Sadhna' No 3, Third Street, Dr Radhakrishnan Road, Mylapore, Chennai - 600004	Special school for the hearing impaired. They also conduct courses for special educators	DSE Mental Retardation RCI D.Ed Hearing Impaired RCI
Deepshika Institute for Child Development and Mental Health	Arya Samaj Mandir, Sharad Chandra Road, Ranchi - 834001	Special school for children with mental handicaps (including Autism); Widely experienced in dealing with epilepsy; Very active Awareness Campaign	D.S.E. Mental Retardation RCI
Digdarshika Institute of Rehabilitation and Research	Red Cross Bhawan Campus, Shivaji Naga, Bhopal - 462016	One of the few institutes in Madhya Pradesh which provides formal training. They provide a range of services which include day-care facilities, pre-vocational and vocational training for young adults (14+) with mental handicaps.	Diploma in Special Education for the Mentally Retarded RCI Also provide in-service training for organisations in the region.



Organization	Address	Services provided	Course information
Dilkhush Special School	Church Road, Juhu, Mumbai - 400049	Special school (English medium) with a special atmosphere where children with handicaps are valued and where learning is fun. Vocational training centre and sheltered workshop and teacher training centre.	Diploma in Special Education for Mentally Retarded RCI
Disha	F-139, Shyam Nagar Extension, Jaipur - 302019	Special school for children with physical and multiple disabilities A range of pre-vocational activities and a bright, colourful atmosphere	No mention of a training course in their pamphlet.
Divine Light Trust School for the Blind	Whitefield, Bangalore 560066	Special school for the visually handicapped	1 year Resource Teacher Training
Enabling Centre	Lady Irwin College, Sikandra Road, New Delhi - 110001	A small integrated school for normal children and children with disabilities within the college campus. Students from the child development courses come here to get practical experience and do research. There is an emphasis on pre-vocational training.	Bachelors and Masters Degree courses in child development at Lady Irwin College. Non-formal education programme for children with special needs Training of personnel
Family of the Disabled	B-1/500 Janak Puri, New Delhi - 110058	A registered voluntary organization that provides support to individuals with disability and enables them to become financially independent. Publishes a bi-annual magazine about disability called "VOICE"	Engages in active awareness raising about disability issues



Organization	Address	Services provided	Course information
G.S. Seth Medical College	Parel, Mumbai - 400012	No information at hand regarding services	BSc Physical and Occupational Therapy
Government Institute of Rehabilitation and Artificial Limb Centre	K.K. Nagar, Chennai - 600083	Recommended by other organizations in South India working with the physically handicapped	Diploma in Prosthetics and Orthotic Engineering
Government Medical College	Nagpur 440003		BSc Physical and Occupational Therapy
Helen Keller Institute for the Deaf and Deaf-Blind	Municipal Secondary School, South Wing, Ground Floor, 'S' Bridge, N.M./Joshi Marg, Bylulla (W) Mumbai - 400011	School for the Deaf School for the Deaf-Blind	Diploma in education of the deaf-blind
Indian Institute of Cerebral Palsy (Spastic Society of Eastern India)	P-35/1 Taratolla Road, Calcutta - 700088	A centre of excellence for cerebral palsy providing holistic educational facilities at a primary, secondary and vocational level Adult training centre Publishes quality literature in all aspects of cerebral palsy for parents and professionals Computer training courses for adults with Disability	P.G. Diploma in Special Education (Multiple Disabilities: Physical and Neurological) EDY (Education of the Developmentally Young) Basic Management for Medical Practitioners Basic Management of Multiple Disability in the Community Short courses for parents and professionals



Organization	Address	Services provided	Course information
Institute for the Physically Handicapped	4, Vishnu Digamber Marg, New Delhi - 110002	A government run organisation which provides out patient services for physio, occupational therapy and speech therapy, and runs training programmes in physical and occupational therapy.	Bsc Physiotherapy RCI Bsc Occupational Therapy RCI Diploma in Prosthetics and Orthotics RCI
Institute of Psychotherapy	402, Shikhar, opp. Crossword, Nr Mithakali Six Roads, Navrangpura, Ahmedabad 380 009	A new institute providing training in psychoanalytic principles through a variety of training programmes The movie club involves screening and analysing movies	PG course in Art Therapy 6 month therapeutic nursery course graduate programme in psychotherapy
Institute of Speech and Hearing	Hennur Road, Bangalore 560084, Karnataka	Evaluates and rehabilitates individuals with speech and hearing disorders Provides early identification and screening service and hearing aids for children Promotes research in the field of speech and hearing impairment. Sunaad- a special school for children with hearing impairment	BSc Speech and Hearing RCI Msc Speech and Hearing Dip. In the education of the Hearing Impaired
Institute of Rehabilitative Science	The Department of Rehabilitation Science, Holy Cross, Trichy, Tamilnadu - 620002	The institute provides pre-school facilities for special children, consultancy services to other special schools, training programmes, workshops and publishes a newsletter.	Masters in Rehabilitation Science Associate degree in Special Education for Hearing Impaired and Visual Handicap



Organization	Address	Services provided	Course information
Jan Madhyam	148 Zamrudpur, New Delhi, 110048	Runs a number of vocational programs for young adults with mental handicaps, both in their Delhi centre and in their rural set-up. In the rural centre, which is only for women, both normal and handicapped women are trained and helped to market what they produce.	
Jamia Millia	Jamia Nagar, New Delhi 110025	Well known college offering a range of unusual courses	BSc Mass communication BA journalism
KPAMRC Karnataka Parents Association for Mentally Retarded Citizens	AMH Compound, off Hosur Road, Near Kidwai Memorial Hospital, Bangalore - 560029	Thriving parents' association with a well established vocational training programme for adults with mental handicaps Quarterly newsletter "The Common Cause"	NCTE Diploma in Special Education (Mental Retardation) NCTE Diploma in Special Education (Specific learning disabilities and integrated education) Autism course for parents and special educators
KEM Hospital	King Edward Memorial Hospital, Mumbai	Well known training institute serving large numbers of patients	BSc Physiotherapy
Light on Yoga Research Trust	Palia Mansion, 622, Lady Jahangir Road, Dadar, Mumbai - 400014	Recommended practitioners of the Iyengar school of Yoga	
Little Flower Convent	Higher Secondary School For The Deaf P.O. Cathedral, Chennai - 500006	Well known school for the deaf, often recommended by colleagues.	Deaf education



Organization	Address	Services provided	Course information
Manovikas Kendra Rehabilitation and Research Institute for the Handicapped	482, Madudah, Plot I-24, Sector J, E.M. Bypass, Calcutta - 700078	Recommended for visiting by local people in Calcutta	None
M.S. University	Vadodara, Gujarat		B.A. Psychology MSW Masters in Social Work (Department of Social Work) Bsc/Msc-Human Development and Family Studies (Faculty of Home Sciences) Bachelor of Physiotherapy
Muskaan	A/28 (basement), Hauz Khas, New Delhi 110016	Vocational training for the disabled; buzzing with energy sheltered workshop	
National Centre for Cerebral Palsy	K.C. Marg, Bandra West, Mumbai - 400050	Special school for children with cerebral palsy Special equipment Centre	PG Diploma in the Education of the Physically Handicapped RCI
National Federation of Parents Associations (for persons with mental handicaps)	A-2520, Netaji Nagar, New Delhi- 110023	A national level organization involved in advocacy work for persons with mental handicaps Publishes a quarterly newsletter called "PARIVAR"	
National Institute for the Mentally Handicapped	Manovikas Nagar, Secunderabad- 500 009	It is one of the four autonomous government institutes which specializes providing multi disciplinary services for people with mental handicaps.	Dip. In Mental retardation RCI BA in Mental Retardation RCI Dip. In Vocational Training and Employment (MR) RCI



Organization	Address	Services provided	Course information
NIMH (cont'd)		Services include a model school, vocational training centre, family cottage services for residential assessment of outstation cases and a well developed publication department.	Short courses for parents and professionals
National Open School	B 31 B Kailash Colony, New Delhi -110048	It offers a wide spectrum of courses of study for purposes of general and continuing education at the school stage. Life and job enrichment programmes are also extended through a package of Vocational Courses.	Flexible self-paced courses leading to secondary school certification for children with learning disabilities. Only candidates in the age range 14-19 are eligible.
National Institute for the Orthopaedically Handicapped	Bon Hooghly, B.T. Road, Calcutta 700 090	It is also one of the four autonomous government institutes providing a wide range of services for people with orthopaedic handicaps. It is a core institute for all governmental research and policy in this field.	BSc physiotherapy BSc Occupational therapy BSc in orthotic and prosthetic engineering
National Institute for the Visually Handicapped	116 Rajpur Road, Dehradun, Uttaranchal	It is an autonomous government institutes providing a wide range of services for blind people. It's objectives are manpower development training, providing education, vocational training and	Dip. for teachers of the Visually Handicapped RCI



Organization	Address	Services provided	Course information
NIVH (cont'd)		rehabilitation services. Services include a special school for the visually handicapped, Braille development unit and Braille library.	
National Institute for Mental Health and Neurosciences	Hosur Road, Bangalore 560029 e-mail: public@nimhans.kar.nic.in	It is the central government institute in the field of Mental Health in India. It is a premier post-graduate teaching hospital that offers comprehensive in-patient and out patient services for psychiatric, neurological and neuro-surgical problems. It is a resource centre for training in Behavioural sciences in the SAARC and South-East Asian region.	Doctorate studies can be pursued in the following fields- Clinical Psychology, Psychiatric Social Work, Psychiatry, Psychopharmacology as well as a number of other neurological specialities. Specialized courses are also available at the Mphil and Masters level. (Search for website, keyword "nimhans")
National Institute for Rehabilitation Training and research	Olatpur, P.O. Bairoi, Dist. Cuttack, Orissa - 754010	It is well known autonomous institute under the central government. It is a nodal institute for research and development in the field of orthotic and prosthetic engineering in India.	BSc Physiotherapy RCI BSc Occupational Therapy RCI Dip. in Prosthetic and Orthotic Engineering RCI
Open Doors	T- 370F Chirag Gaon, New Delhi 110017 e-mail: autism@vsnl.com	Merry Barua has been actively campaigning for the recognition of autism as a specific handicap requiring a specialized approach. They run a special school for children with Autism; training and counselling programmes for parents; seminars and	Parent workshops Short courses



Organization	Address	Services provided	Course information
Postgraduate Institute of Medical Sciences and Research	Sector 12, Chandigarh 160012	workshops for professionals; publish an autism newsletter and have developed a resource centre.	
		It is one of the largest government medical training institutes in Northern India providing in-patient and out-patient medical services to people from Punjab, Haryana, UP, etc. In addition to the MBBS training courses they also have highly special rehabilitation departments which provide paramedical professional services and training.	BSc Medical Technology RCI BSc Ophthalmic Technology RCI BSc Audiology and Speech Therapy RCI
REACH: Society for Remedial Education Assessment Handicapped	18/2/A/3 Uday Shankar Sarani, Golf Green, Calcutta -700095	Educational and therapy programmes for children with physical handicaps; mental handicaps; Care for children with severe handicaps Homemanagement programme Pre-vocational training	Workshops for parents; professionals
Roshini Nilaya	Mangalore University	We have heard that they run a good training programme for social work at both a bachelors and masters level.	MSW
Ram Chandran Medical College and Research Institute	Porur Chennai 600116	Not known	BSc Speech and Hearing

Organization	Address	Services provided	Course information
Rehabilitation Council of India	4 Vishnu Digamber Marg, New Delhi 110002	This is a regulatory body with statutory powers given by the Government of India to maintain standards in training and rehabilitative services in the field of Disability.	All training programmes mentioned in this directory that have been recognized by the Council have the letters 'RCI' following the course title.
SPJ Sadhana School	Sophia College B.Desai Rd. Mumbai	Special school for the developmentally handicapped with a large occupational therapy department Well planned vocational training department Sheltered workshop encouraging self employment	Short courses for professionals
Saraswati Vidya Kendra	Learning Centre for Children, 1, Eldams Road, Chennai 600018	Recommended by several professionals during our Bangalore visit	Not known
SNDT Women's University	Department of Special Education, Sir Vithaldas Vidya Vihar, Juhu Road, Santa Cruz (W) Mumbai 400049	It runs one of the best university courses in the country and has an excellent faculty in the fields of Psychology and Special Education.	M.Ed Special Education RCI B.Ed. Special Education RCI DSE Diploma in Teacher Education with Learning Disability RCI Psychology, special education
Spastics Society of Northern India	2 Balbir Saxena Marg, Hauz Khas, New Delhi-110016	Specialist centre for cerebral palsy providing a range of multidisciplinary services Special school for children with cerebral palsy engaged in both formal and non-formal education;	PG Dip. In Special Education (Multiple Disabilities) Basic developmental therapy Community based rehabilitation course



Organization	Address	Services provided	Course information
Spastics Society of Karnataka	31 5 th Cross Indira Nagar 1 st stage Bangalore - 560038	They have a school for children with cerebral palsy. They follow the national open school curriculum and provide vocational training for young adults. It has an excellent diagnostic and research centre built to provide multi-disciplinary assessment and remedial programmes.	We would recommend this as a place for information on career courses available in Southern India in all fields of rehabilitation.
Shree Ramana Maharishi Academy for the Blind	3rd Cross, JP Nagar III Phase, Bangalore 560078	Free school for visually impaired children till class 10; provides vocational training for disabled youth in computers, horticulture and industrial skills.	Teacher training for the visually impaired
Sri Ram Krishna Mission Vidyalaya	Sri Ramkrishna Vidyalaya Post, Coimbatore 641020	Special school and training for the blind.	B Ed. Special Education (RCI) M. Ed. Special Education (RCI)
SMS Medical College	C/o Dr. P.K. Sethi, Vivekanand Marg Jaipur, Rajasthan	Dr. Sethi is well known across the world for inventing the most unique artificial foot commonly known as the 'Jaipur Foot'. He advocates the creative use of indigenous materials in the development of orthotic devices.	Training in the design & development of orthotic devices appropriate for India.
St Agnes Special School	Bedore Mangalore 575002	Special school for the mentally handicapped	DSE MR (RCI)
Topiwala National Medical College and BYL Nair Charitable Hospital Sciences	Dr. A. L. Nair Road, Mumbai 400008	More commonly known as the Nair Hospital. It has one of the oldest departments in India providing services for speech, language and hearing rehabilitation. They have	BSc Speech and hearing RCI



Organization	Address	Services provided	Course information
		been able to achieve a fine balance between research and clinical practice.	
Tata Institute of Social Sciences	Near R. K. Studios, Deonar, Mumbai	It is the premier institute for providing specialised training in social work at Masters level. Specialisation offered in community social work, medical and psychiatric social work, criminal and correctional social work, family and welfare social work	BSw MSw Social work
Tamana	D6 Vasant Vihar, New Delhi	A special school for children with cerebral palsy and mental handicap; with a special emphasis on autism; Tamana is a happy, cheerful place, named after the daughter of its founder	DSE (Mental Retardation) , RCI
Wai Akshar Institute	401 Ganapati Ali, PO Box 39 Wai, Satara Dist., Maharashtra 412803	Provides comprehensive rehabilitation services to the surrounding rural area. This includes clinical and child guidance to families with disabled children; a school for mentally retarded children, a publication department translating material into Marathi and a vocational centre.	DSE (Mental Retardation) RCI Training given in regional language - Marathi
Yogaganga Centre for Yoga studies	Mr Chanchani Padmini Nivas Estate Library, Mussourie, Uttaranchal-248197	One of the few disciples of Sri BKS Iyengar teaching yoga to adults and children. They have well developed yoga programmes for public schools.	Read section Yoga Therapy pages 29 - 30.



acknowledgements

Putting this booklet together was a much larger task than any of us envisioned when we first came up with the idea over three years ago. Our original team of two expanded to six (although none of us worked on it full-time) and many of our friends and colleagues were drawn in as advisers, guides and people to try out our ideas on.

To gather the material we have presented here, we traveled to many parts of the country, meeting Special Needs professionals, activists and parents and we have benefited enormously from their encouragement and support. While it is impossible to thank each one of them individually, we do want to acknowledge the fact that this is a collaborative effort which has drawn on the wonderful and pioneering work going on all over the country.

One organization which we must name is the **Sir Ratan Tata Trust**, which funded the research for and the printing of this booklet. They have been both generous and patient and we are very grateful!

One thing which has become abundantly clear to us while working on this booklet is how much more we could have included. There finally came a point where we simply had to say “Enough!” This is not the last word, however. We hope to put out a more comprehensive second edition in the near future and we welcome your comments and suggestions. If we have overlooked an institution or an organisation which you think is too good to be missed, let us know! If we have neglected to mention a career option which you think people would be interested in, write and tell us! If you want to help with the next edition, come and visit!

Karuna Vihar : 22 Vasant Vihar - I, Dehra Doon - 248006 Uttaranchal.

Although this Career Guide was very much a collaborative effort, with many people assisting us in many ways, final responsibility lies with the people who were at it night and day for two years :

APARNA BHONSLE is a Speech Therapist. She trained at the All India Institute of Medical Science and then spent the next six years working in England where she specialized in Pediatric Speech Therapy. She has worked with Karuna Vihar for the past three years both as a consultant therapist and on the Awareness Campaign. She lives in Dehra Doon with her dog, Suki.

JO CHOPRA is the Director of Karuna Vihar and a writer by profession. She is married to Ravi and their daughter, Moy Moy, is the inspiration for Karuna Vihar. They have two other children - Anand and Cathleen - and they have lived in Dehra Doon for nearly thirteen years.

SHAILA FALEIRO was one of the first Special Educators at Karuna Vihar. Trained at the Spastics Society in Delhi, she worked with us for two years and was with the Career Guide in its earliest stages. She is now a freelance writer and designer of web sites in Delhi. When the Guide got stalled a year ago, she made a special trip to Dehra Doon to jumpstart it and get us back on the road.

KUSUM KANWAR holds a Master's degree in Education from SNDT University in Mumbai and is a college lecturer in Education as well as a member of the KV Awareness Team. She and her husband, Jitender, live in Dehra Doon with their two daughters Rubal and Rimjhim.

ELINOR MOUNTFORD is a computer designer who worked with Disability Awareness campaigns in the UK before coming to live in Dehra Doon. As part of our publications team, she worked on design and layout as well as editing and proofreading. She and her son Derek now live in England.

SHALINI SINHA is an artist and a graphic designer. She has worked with Karuna Vihar as a consultant for the past two years and is responsible for the sudden improvement in all of our publications. She and her two daughters - Amaya and Tanisha - have lived in Dehra Doon for the past five years.



The Latika Roy Memorial Foundation is a registered society, dedicated to the promotion of creative education and the well-being of children. Its projects include Karuna Vihar, a school for children with mental and physical handicaps; Latika Vihar, a children's centre for creativity and fun; the KV Awareness Campaign, which works to increase awareness in the community around disability issues; and Asha Kiran, a women's employment project which produces handmade paper items decorated with pressed wildflowers. Profits from sales go to support Karuna Vihar.



THE LATIKA ROY MEMORIAL FOUNDATION